This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

600089365Z

THE

FORTUNES OF GLENCORE.

BY

CHARLES LEVER.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON

CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.

MDCCCLVII.

549. N. 165.

THE

FORTUNES OF GLENCORE.

CHAPTER I.

SOME TRAITS OF LIFE.

It was the night Lady Glencore received; and, as usual, the street was crowded with equipages, which somehow seemed to have got into inextricable confusion—some endeavouring to turn back, while others pressed forward — the court of the palace being closely packed with carriages which the thronged street held in fast blockade. As the apartments which faced the street were not ever used for these receptions, the dark unlighted windows suggested no remark; but they who had entered the court-yard

were struck by the gloomy aspect of the vast building; not only that the entrance and the stairs were in darkness, but the whole suite of rooms, usually brilliant as the day, were now in deep gloom. From every carriage-window heads were protruded, wondering at this strange spectacle, and eager inquiries passed on every side for an explanation. The explanation of "sudden illness" was rapidly disseminated but as rapidly contradicted, and the reply given by the porter to all demands quickly repeated from mouth to mouth, "Her ladyship will not receive."

"Can no one explain this mystery?" cried the old Princess Borinsky, as, heavy with fat and diamonds, she hung out of her carriage-window. "Oh, there's Major Scaresby; he is certain to know, if it be anything malicious."

Scaresby was, however, too busy in recounting his news to others to perceive the signals the old Princess held out; and it was only as her chasseur, six feet three of green and gold, bent down to give her Highness's message, that the Major hurried off, in all the importance of a momentary scandal, to the side of her carriage.

"Here I am, all impatience. What is it, Scaresby?—tell me quickly," cried she.

"A smash, my dear Princess—nothing more or less," said he, in a voice which nature seemed to have invented to utter impertinences—so harsh and grating, and yet so painfully distinct in all its accents—"as complete a smash as ever I heard of."

"You can't mean that her fortune is in peril?"

"I suppose that must suffer also. It is her character—her station as one of us—that's shipwrecked here."

"Go on, go on," cried she, impatiently—"I wish to hear it all."

"All is very briefly related, then," said he. "The charming Countess, you remember, ran away with a countryman of mine, young Glencore, of the 8th Hussars; I used to know his father intimately."

"Never mind his father."

"That's exactly what Glencore did. He came over here and fell in love with the girl, and they ran off together, but they forgot to get married, Princess. Ha—ha—ha!" And he laughed with a cackle a demon could not have rivalled.

"I don't believe a word of it—I'll never believe it," cried the Princess.

"That's exactly what I was recommending to the Marquesa Guesteni. I said, you needn't believe it. Why, how do we go anywhere, now-a-days, except by 'not believing' the evil stories that are told of our entertainers."

"Yes, yes; but I repeat that this is an infamous calumny. She, a Countess, of a family second to none in all Italy; her father a Grand d'Espagne. I'll go to her this moment."

"She'll not see you. She has just refused to see La Genori," said the Major, tartly. "Though, if a cracked reputation might have afforded any sympathy, she might have admitted *her*."

"What is to be done?" exclaimed the Princess, sorrowfully.

"Just what you suggested a few moments ago—don't believe it. Hang me, but good houses and good cooks are growing too scarce to make one credulous of the ills that can be said of their owners."

"I wish I knew what course to take," muttered the Princess.

"I'll tell you, then. Get half a dozen of your own set together to-morrow morning, vote the whole story an atrocious falsehood, and go in a body and tell the Countess your mind. You know as well as I, Princess, that social credit is as great a bubble as commercial; we should all of us be bankrupts if our books were seen. Ay, by Jove, and the similitude goes further too—for when one old established house breaks, there is generally a crash in the whole community around it."

While they thus talked, a knot had gathered around the carriage, all eager to hear what opinion the Princess had formed on the catastrophe.

Various were the sentiments expressed by the different speakers—some sorrowfully deploring the disaster; others, more eagerly inveighing against the infamy of the man who had proclaimed it. Many declared that they had come to the determination to discredit the story. Not one, however, sincerely professed that he disbelieved it.

Can it be, as the French moralist asserts, that we have a latent sense of satisfaction in the misfortunes of even our best friends; or

is it, as we rather suspect, that true friendship is a rarer thing than is commonly believed, and has little to do with those conventional intimacies which so often bear its name?

Assuredly, of all this well-bred, well-dressed, and well-born company, now thronging the court-yard of the palace and the street in front of it, the tone was as much sarcasm as sorrow, and many a witty epigram and smart speech were launched over a disaster which might have been spared such levity. At length the space slowly began to thin. Slowly carriage after carriage drove off—the heaviest grief of their occupants often being over a lost *soirée*—an unprofited occasion to display toilette and jewels—while a few, more reflective, discussed what course was to be followed in future, and what recognition extended to the victim.

The next day Florence sat in committee over the lost Countess. Witnesses were heard and evidence taken as to her case. They all agreed it was a great hardship—a terrible calamity—but still, if true, what could be done?

Never was there a society less ungene-

rously prudish, and yet there were cases—this, one of them—which transgressed all conventional rule. Like a crime which no statute had ever contemplated, it stood out self-accused and self-condemned. A few might, perhaps, have been merciful, but they were overborne by numbers. Lady Glencore's beauty and her vast fortune were now counts in the indictment against her, and many a jealous rival was not sorry at this hour of humiliation. The despotism of beauty is not a very mild sway, after all; and, perhaps, the Countess had exercised her rule right royally. At all events, it was the young and the good-looking who voted her exclusion, and only those who could not enter into competition with her charms who took the charitable side. They discussed and debated the question all day; but while they hesitated over the reprieve, the prisoner was beyond the law. The gate of the palace, locked and barred all day, refused entrance to every one; at night, it opened to admit the exit of a travelling-carriage. The next morning large bills of sale, posted over the walls, declared that all the furniture and decorations were to be sold.

The Countess had left Florence—none knew whither.

"I must really have those large Sèvres jars," said one; "and I, the small park phaeton," cried another.

"I hope she has not taken Horace with her; he was the best cook in Italy. Splendid hock she had,—I wonder is there much of it left."

"I wish we were certain of another bad reputation to replace her," grunted out Scaresby; "they are the only kind of people who give good dinners, and never ask for returns."

And thus these dear friends—guests of a hundred brilliant *fêtes*—discussed the fall of her they once had worshipped.

It may seem small-minded and narrow to stigmatise such conduct as this. Some may say that for the ordinary courtesies of society no pledges of friendship are required, no real gratitude incurred. Be it so. Still the revulsion from habits of deference and respect to disparagement, and even sarcasm, is a sorry evidence of human kindness; and the threshold, over which for years we had only passed as guests, might well suggest

sadder thoughts, as we tread it to behold desolation.

The fair Countess had been the celebrity of that city for many a day. The stranger of distinction sought her, as much as a matter of course, as he sought presentation to the sovereign. Her salons had the double eminence of brilliancy in rank and brilliancy in wit; her entertainments were cited as models of elegance and refinement, and now she was gone! The extreme of regret that followed her was the sorrow of those who were to dine there no more; the grief of him who thought he should never have a house like it.

The respectable vagabonds of society are a large family, much larger than is usually supposed. They are often well-born, almost always well-mannered, invariably well-dressed. They do not, at first blush, appear to discharge any very great or necessary function in life, but we must by no means, from that, infer their inutility. Naturalists tell us that several varieties of insect existence we rashly set down as mere annoyances, have their peculiar spheres of usefulness and good; and, doubtless, these same loungers contribute in some mysterious man-

ner to the welfare of that state which they only seem to burden. We are told that but for flies, for instance, we should be infested with myriads of winged tormentors, insinuating themselves into our meat and drink, and rendering life miserable. Is there not something very similar performed by the respectable class I allude to? Are they not invariably devouring and destroying some vermin a little smaller than themselves, and making thus a healthier atmosphere for their betters? If good society only knew the debt it owes to these defenders of its privileges, a "Vagabond's Home and Aged Asylum" would speedily figure amongst our national charities.

We have been led to these thoughts by observing how distinctly different was Major Scaresby's tone in talking of the Countess when he addressed his betters or spoke in his own class. To the former he gave vent to all his sarcasm and bitterness; they liked it just because they wouldn't condescend to it themselves. To his own he put on the bullying air of one who said, "How should *you* possibly know what vices such great people have, any more than you know what

they have for dinner? *I* live amongst them —*I* understand them—*I* am aware that what would be very shocking in *you* is quite permissible to *them*. *They* know how to be wicked; *you* only know how to be gross." And thus Scaresby talked, and sneered, and scoffed, making such a hash of good and evil, such a Maëlstrom of right and wrong, that it were a subtle moralist who could have extracted one solitary scrap of uncontaminated meaning from all his muddy lucubrations.

He, however, effected this much: he kept the memory of her who had gone, alive by daily calumnies. He embalmed her in poisons, each morning appearing with some new trait of her extravagance, till the world, grown sick of himself and his theme, vowed they would hear no more of either, and so she was forgotten.

Ay, good reader, utterly forgotten! The gay world, for so it likes to be called, has no greater element of enjoyment amongst all its high gifts than its precious power of forgetting. It forgets not only all it owes to others—gratitude, honour, and esteem—but even the closer obligations it has contracted

with itself. The Palazzo della Torre was for a fortnight the resort of the curious and the idle. At the sale, crowds appeared to secure some object of especial value to each; and then, the gates were locked, the shutters closed, and a large, ill-written notice on the door announced that any letters for the proprietor were to be addressed to "Pietro Arretini, Via del Sole."

CHAPTER II.

AN UPTONIAN DESPATCH.

"British Legation, Naples.

"MY DEAR HARCOURT,—It would seem that a letter of mine to you must have miscarried, a not unfrequent occurrence when entrusted to our Foreign Office for transmission. Should it ever reach you, you will perceive how unjustly you have charged me with neglecting your wishes. I have ordered the Sicilian wine for your friend; I have obtained the Royal leave for you to shoot in Calabria; and, I assure you, it is rather a rare incident in my life to have forgotten nothing required of me! Perhaps you, who know me well, will do me this justice, and be the more grateful for my present promptitude.

"It was quite a mistake sending me here;

for anything there is to be done, Spencer or Lonsdale would perfectly suffice. *I* ought to have gone to Vienna; and so they know at home—but it's the old game played over again. Important questions! why, my dear friend, there is not a matter between this country and our own that rises above the capacity of a Colonel of Dragoons. Meanwhile, really great events are preparing in the East of Europe—not that I am going to inflict them upon you, nor ask you to listen to speculations which even those in authority turn a deaf ear to.

"It is very kind of you to think of my health. I am still a sufferer; the old pains rather aggravated than relieved by this climate. You are aware that, though warm, the weather here has some exciting property, some excess or other of a peculiar gas in the atmosphere, prejudicial to certain temperaments. I feel it greatly, and though the season is midsummer, I am obliged to dress entirely in a light costume of buckskin, and take Marsalla baths, which refresh me, at least, for the while. I have also taken to smoke the leaves of the nux vomica, steeped in arrack, and think it agrees with me. The king

has most kindly placed a little villa at Ischia at my disposal; but I do not mean to avail myself of the politeness. The Duke of San Giustino has also offered me his palace at Baia, but I don't fancy leaving this just now, where there is a doctor, a certain Luigi Buffeloni, who really seems to have hit off my case. He calls it arterial arthriticis, a kind of inflammatory action of one coat of the arterial system; his notion is highly ingenious, and wonderfully borne out by the symptoms. I wish you would ask Brodie, or any of our best men, whether they have met with this affection? what class it affects, and what course it usually takes? My Italian doctor implies, that it is the passing malady of men highly excitable, and largely endowed with mental gifts. He may, or may not, be correct in this. It is only nature makes the blunder of giving the sharpest swords the weakest scabbards—what a pity the weapon cannot be worn naked!

"You ask me if I like this place. I do, perhaps, as well as I should like anywhere. There is a wonderful sameness over the world just now, preluding, I have very

little doubt, some great outburst of nationality from all the countries of Europe. Just as periods of Puritanism succeed intervals of gross licentiousness.

"Society here is, therefore, what you see it in London or Paris; well-bred people, like Gold, are current everywhere. There is really little peculiar to observe. I don't perceive that there is more levity than elsewhere. The difference is, perhaps, that there is less shame about it, since it is under the protection of the Church.

"I go out very little: my notion is, that the Diplomatist, like the ancient Augur, must not suffer himself to be vulgarised by contact. He can only lose, not gain, by that mixed intercourse with the world. I have a few who come when I want them, and go in like manner. They tell me 'what is going on,' far better and more truthfully than paid employés, and they cannot trace my intentions through my inquiries, and hasten off to retail them at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Of my colleagues I see as little as possible, though when we do meet, I feel an unbounded affection for them. So much for my life, dear Harcourt; on the

whole, a very tolerable kind of existence, which if few would envy, still fewer would care to part with.

"I now come to the chief portion of your letter.—This boy of Glencore's, I rather like the account you give of him, better than you do yourself. Imaginative and dreamy he may be, but remember what he was, and where we have placed him. A moonstruck, romantic youth at a German University. Is it not painting the lily?

"I merely intended he should go to Göttingen to learn the language, always a difficulty, if not abstracted from other and more dulcet sounds. I never meant to have him domesticated with some rusty Hochgelehrter, eating sauer kraut in company with a green-eyed Fräulein, and imbibing love and metaphysics together. Let him 'moon away,' as you call it, my dear Harcourt. It is wonderfully little consequence what any one does with his intellect till he be three or four-and-twenty. Indeed, I half suspect that the soil might be left quietly to rear weeds till that time, and as to dreaminess, it signifies nothing if there he a strong 'physique.' With a weak frame, imagination will play

the tyrant, and never cease till it dominates over all the other faculties; but where there is strength and activity, there is no fear of this.

"You amuse me with your account of the doctor; and so the Germans have actually taken him for a savant, and given him a degree 'honoris causa.' May they never make a worse blunder. The man is eminently remarkable,—with his opportunities, miraculous. I am certain, Harcourt, you never felt half the pleasure on arriving at a region well stocked with game, that he did on finding himself in a land of Libraries, Museums, and Collections. Fancy the poor fellow's ecstasy at being allowed to range at will through all ancient literature, of which hitherto a stray volume alone had reached him. Imagine his delight as each day opened new stores of knowledge to him, surrounded as he was by all that could encourage zeal and reward research. The boy's treatment of him pleases me much, it smacks of the gentle blood in his veins. Poor lad, there is something very sad in his case.

"You need not have taken such trouble about accounts and expenditure: of course,

whatever you have done I perfectly approve of. You say that the boy has no idea of money or its value. There is both good and evil in this; and now as to his future. I should have no objection whatever to having him attached to my Legation here, and, perhaps, no great difficulty in effecting his appointment; but there is a serious obstacle in his position. The young men who figure at embassies and missions are all 'cognate numbers.' They each of them know who and what the other is, whence he came, and so on. Now our poor boy could not stand this ordeal, nor would it be fair he should be exposed to it. Besides this, it was never Glencore's wish, but the very opposite to it, that he should be brought prominently forward in life. He even suggested one of the Colonies as the means of withdrawing him at once, and for ever, from public gaze.

"You have interested me much by what you say of the boy's progress. His tastes, I infer, lie in the direction which, in a worldly sense, are least profitable; but, after all, Harcourt, every one has brains enough, and to spare, for any career. Let us only decide upon that one most fitted for him, and de-

pend upon it, his faculties will day by day conform to his duties, and his tastes be merely dissipations, just as play or wine is to coarser natures.

"If you really press the question of his coming to me, I will not refuse, seeing that I can take my own time to consider what steps subsequently should be adopted. How is it that you know nothing of Glencore—can he not be traced?

"Lord Selby, whom you may remember in the Blues formerly, dined here yesterday, and mentioned a communication he had received from his lawyer, with regard to some property in tail; which, if Glencore should leave no heir male, devolved upon him. I tried to find out the whereabouts and the amount of this heritage; but with the admirable indifference that characterises him, he did not know or care.

"As to my Lady, I can give you no information whatever; her house at Florence is uninhabited; the furniture is sold off; but no one seems even to guess whither she has betaken herself. The fast and loose of that pleasant city are, as I hear, actually houseless since her departure. No asylum opens

there with fire and cigars. A number of the destitute have come down here in half despair, amongst the rest, Scaresby—Major Scaresby, an insupportable nuisance of flat stories and stale gossip; one of those fellows who cannot make even malevolence amusing, and who speak ill of their neighbours without a single spark of wit. He has left three cards upon me, each duly returned; but I am resolved that our interchange of courtesies shall proceed no further.

"I trust I have omitted nothing in reply to your last despatch, except it be to say that I look for you here about September, or earlier, if as convenient to you; you will, of course, write to me, however, meanwhile.

"Do not mention having heard from me at the clubs or in society. I am, as I have the right to be, on the sick list, and it is as well my rest should remain undisturbed.

"I wish you had any means of making it known that the article in the Quarterly, on our Foreign relations, is not mine. The newspapers have coolly assumed me to be the author, and of course I am not going to give them the *éclat* of a personal denial. The fellow who wrote it must be an ass;

since had he known what he pretends, he had never revealed it. He who wants to bag his bird, Colonel, never bangs away at nothing. I have now completed a longer despatch to you than I intend to address to the Noble Secretary at F. O., and am yours, very faithfully,

"HORACE UPTON.

"Whose Magnesia is it that contains essence of Bark? Tripley's or Chipley's I think. Find it out for me, and send me a packet through the office; put up Fauchard's pamphlet with it, on Spain, and a small box of those new blisters, Mouches they are called; they are to be had at Atkinson's. I have got so accustomed to their stimulating power that I never write without one or two on my forehead. They tell me the cautery, if dexterously applied, is better; but I have not tried it."

CHAPTER III.

THE TUTOR AND HIS PUPIL.

We are not about to follow up the correspondence of Sir Horace by detailing the reply which Harcourt sent, and all that thereupon ensued between them.

We pass over, then, some months of time, and arrive at the late autumn.

It is a calm, still morning; the sea, streaked with tinted shadows, is without a ripple; the ships of many nations that float on it are motionless, their white sails hung out to bleach, their ensigns drooping beside the masts. Over the summit of Vesuvius, for we are at Naples, a light blue cloud hangs, the solitary one in all the sky. A mild, plaintive song, the chant of some fishermen on the rocks, is the only sound, save the

continuous hum of that vast city, which swells and falls at intervals.

Close beside the sea, seated on a rock, are two figures. One is that of a youth of some eighteen or nineteen years; his features, eminently handsome, wear an expression of gloomy pride, as in deep preoccupation he gazes out over the bay; to all seeming, indifferent to the fair scene before him, and wrapped in his own sad thoughts. The other is a short, square-built, almost uncouth figure, overshadowed by a wide straw hat, which seems even to diminish his stature; a suit of black, wide and ample enough for one twice his size, gives his appearance a grotesqueness to which his features contribute their share.

It is, indeed, a strange physiognomy, to which Celt and Calmuc seem equally to contribute. The low, overhanging forehead; the intensely keen eye, sparkling with an almost imp-like drollery, are contrasted by a firmly compressed mouth, and a far-projecting under jaw, that imply sternness even to cruelty; a mass of waving black hair, that covers neck and shoulders, adds a species of savagery to a head, which assuredly has no

need of such aid. Bent down over a large quarto volume, he never lifts his eyes; but, intently occupied, his lips are rapidly repeating the words as he reads them.

"Do you mean to pass the morning here?" asks the youth, at length, "or where shall I find you later on?"

"I'll do whatever you like best," said the other, in a rich brogue; "I'm agreeable to go or stay, 'ad utrumque paratus.'" And Billy Traynor, for it was he, shut up his venerable volume.

"I don't wish to disturb you," said the boy, mildly, "you can read. *I* cannot; I have a fretful, impatient feeling over me, that, perhaps, will go off with exercise. I'll set out, then, for a walk, and come back here towards evening, then go and dine at the Rocca, and afterwards whatever you please."

"If you say that, then," said Billy, in a voice of evident delight, "we'll finish the day at the Professor Tadeucci's, and get him to go over that analysis again."

"I have no taste for chemistry. It always seems to me to end where it began," said the boy, impatiently. "Where do all re-

searches tend to? how are you elevated in intellect? how are your thoughts higher, wider, nobler, by all these mixings and manipulations?"

"Is it nothing to know how thunder and lightning is made? to understand electricity, to dive into the secrets of that old crater there, and see the ingredients in the crucible that was bilin' three thousand years ago?"

"These things appeal more grandly to my imagination when the mystery of their forces is unrevealed. I like to think of them as dread manifestations of a mighty will, rather than gaseous combinations or metallic affinities."

"And what prevents you?" said Billy, eagerly; "is the grandeur of the phenomenon impaired, because it is in part intelligible? Ain't you elevated as a reasoning being when you get, what I may call, a peep into God's workshop, rather than by implicitly accepting results just as any old woman accepts a superstition?"

"There is something ignoble in mechanism," said the boy, angrily.

"Don't say that, while your heart is beatin' and your arteries is contractin'—never

say it as long as your lungs dilate or collapse. It's mechanism makes water burst out of the ground, and, swelling into streams, flow as mighty rivers through the earth. It's mechanism raises the sap to the topmast bough of the cedar-tree that waves over Lebanon. 'Tis the same power moves planets above, just to show us that as there is nothing without a cause, there is one great and final 'Cause' behind all."

"And will you tell me," said the boy, sneeringly, "that a sunbeam pours more gladness into your heart because a prism has explained to you the composition of light?"

"God's blessings never seemed the less to me because he taught me the beautiful laws that guide them," said Billy, reverently; "every little step that I take out of darkness is on the road, at least, to Him."

In part abashed by the words, in part admonished by the tone of the speaker, the boy was silent for some minutes. "You know, Billy," said he, at length, "that I spoke in no irreverence; that I would no more insult your convictions than I would outrage my own. It is simply that it suits my dreamy

indolence to like the wonderful better than the intelligible; and you must acknowledge that there never was so palatable a theory for ignorance."

"Ay, but I don't want you to be ignorant," said Billy, earnestly; "and there's no greater mistake than supposing that knowledge is an impediment to the play of fancy. Take my word for it, Master Charles, imagination, no more than any one else, does not work best in the dark."

"I certainly am no adept under such circumstances," said the boy. "I haven't told you what happened me in the studio last night. I went in without a candle, and, trying to grope my way to the table, I overturned the large olive jar, full of clay, against my Niobe, and smashed her to atoms."

"Smashed Niobe!" cried Billy, in horror.

"In pieces. I stood over her sadder than ever she felt herself, and I have not had the courage to enter the studio since."

"Come, come, let us see if she couldn't be restored," said Billy, rising. "Let us go down there together."

"You may, if you have any fancy—there's the key," said the boy. "I'll return there

no more till the rubbish be cleared away." And so saying he moved off, and was soon out of sight.

Deeply grieving over this disaster, Billy Traynor hastened from the spot, but he had only reached the garden of the Chiaja when he heard a faint, weak voice calling him by his name; he turned, and saw Sir Horace Upton, who, seated in a sort of portable arm-chair, was enjoying the fresh air from the sea.

"Quite a piece of good fortune to meet you, Doctor," said he, smiling; "neither you nor your pupil have been near me for ten days or more."

"'Tis our own loss then, your Excellency," said Billy, bowing; "even a chance few minutes in your company, is like whetting the intellectual razor—I feel myself sharper for the whole day after."

"Then, why not come oftener, man?—are you afraid of wearing the steel all away?"

"'Tis more afraid I am of gapping the fine edge of your Excellency by contact with my own ruggedness," said Billy, obsequiously.

"You were intended for a courtier, Doctor," said Sir Horace, smiling.

"If there was such a thing as a court fool now-a-days, I'd look for the place."

"The age is too dull for such a functionary. They'll not find ten men in any country of Europe equal to the office," said Sir Horace. "One has only to see how lamentably dull are the journals dedicated to wit and drollery, to admit this fact; though written by many hands—how rare it is to chance upon what provokes a laugh. You'll have fifty metaphysicians anywhere before you'll hit on one Molière. Will you kindly open that umbrella for me. This autumnal sun, they say, gives sun-stroke. And now what do you think of this boy? he'll not make a diplomatist, that's clear."

"He'll not make anything—just for one simple reason, because he could be whatever he pleased."

"An intellectual spendthrift," sighed Sir Horace. "What a hopeless bankruptcy it leads to."

"My notion is 'twould be spoiling him entirely to teach him a trade or a profession. Let his great faculties shoot up without

being trimmed or trained—don't want to twist or twine or turn them at all, but just see whether he won't, out of his uncurbed nature, do better than all our discipline could effect. There's no better colt than the one that was never backed till he was a five-year-old."

"He ought to have a career," said Sir Horace, thoughtfully. "Every man ought to have a calling, if only that he may be able to abandon it."

"Just as a sailor has a point of departure," said Billy.

"Precisely," said Sir Horace, pleased at being so well appreciated.

"You are aware, Doctor," resumed he, after a pause, "that the lad will have little or no private fortune. There are family circumstances that I cannot enter into, nor would your own delicacy require it, that will leave him almost entirely dependent on his own efforts. Now, as time is rolling over, we should bethink us what direction it were wisest to give his talents—for he has talents."

"He has genius and talents both," said Billy; "he has the raw material and the workshop to manufacture it."

"I am rejoiced to hear such an account from one so well able to pronounce," said Sir Horace, blandly; and Billy bowed, and blushed with a sense of happiness that none but humble men, so praised, could ever feel.

"I should like much to hear what you would advise for him," said Upton.

"He's so full of promise," said Billy, "that whatever he takes to he'll be sure to fancy he'd be better at something else. See now—it isn't a bull I'm sayin', but I'll make a blunder of it if I try to explain."

"Go on, I think I apprehend you."

"By coorse you do. Well, it's that same feelin' makes me cautious of sayin' what he ought to do. For, after all, a variety of capacity implies discursiveness, and discursiveness is the mother of failure."

"You speak like an oracle, Doctor."

"If I do, it's because the priest is beside me," said Billy, bowing. "My notion is this: I'd let him cultivate his fine gifts for a year or two, in any way he liked—in work or idleness—for they'll grow in the fallow as well as in the tilled land. I'd let him be whatever he liked—striving always, as he's sure to be striving, after something higher,

and greater, and better than he'll ever reach; and then when he has felt both his strength and his weakness, I'd try and attach him to some great man in public life; set a grand ambition before him, and say, 'Go on.'"

"He's scarcely the stuff for public life," muttered Sir Horace.

"He is," said Billy, boldly.

"He'd be easily abashed—easily deterred by failure."

"Sorra bit. Success might cloy, but failure would never damp him."

"I can't fancy him a speaker."

"Rouse him by a strong theme and a flat contradiction, and you'll see what he can do."

"And then his lounging, idle habits——"

"He'll do more in two hours than any one else in two days."

"You are a warm admirer, my dear Doctor," said Sir Horace, smiling blandly. "I should almost rather have such a friend than the qualities that win the friendship. Have you a message for me, Antoine?" said he to a servant who stood at a little distance, waiting the order to approach. The man came forward, and whispered a few words.

Sir Horace's cheek gave a faint, the very faintest possible, sign of flush as he listened, and uttering a brief, "Very well," dismissed the messenger.

"Will you give me your arm, Doctor?" said he, languidly; and the elegant Sir Horace Upton passed down the crowded promenade leaning on his uncouth companion, without the slightest consciousness of the surprise and sarcasm around him. No man more thoroughly could appreciate conventionalities; he would weigh the effect of appearances to the veriest nicety; but in practice he seemed either to forget his knowledge or despise it. So that, as leaning on the little dwarf's arm he moved along, his very air of fashionable languor seemed to heighten the absurdity of the contrast. Nay, he actually seemed to bestow an almost deferential attention to what the other said — bowing blandly his acquiescence, and smiling with an urbanity all his own.

Of the crowd that passed, nearly all knew the English Minister. Uncovered heads were bent obsequiously; graceful salutations met him as he went, while a hundred conjec-

tures ran as to who and what might be his companion.

He was a Mesmeric Professor, a Writer in Cypher, a Rabbi, an Egyptian Explorer, an Alchymist, an African Traveller, and at last, Mons. Thiers!—and so the fine world of Naples discussed the humble individual whom you and I, dear reader, are acquainted with as Billy Traynor.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW A "RECEPTION" COMES TO ITS CLOSE.

On the evening of that day, the handsome saloons of the great Hotel "Universo" were filled with a brilliant assemblage, to compliment the Princess Sabloukoff on her arrival. We have already introduced this lady to the reader, and have no need to explain the homage and attention of which she was the object. There is nothing which so perfectly illustrates the maxim of "*ignotum pro magnifico*" as the career of politics; certain individuals obtaining, as they do, a pre-eminence and authority from a species of mysterious prestige about them, and a reputation of having access at any moment to the highest personage in the world of state affairs. Doubtless great ministers are occasionally not sorry to see the public full cry on a false

scent, and encourage to a certain extent this mystification; but still it would be an error to deny to such persons as we speak of, a knowledge, if not actually an influence, in great affairs.

When the Swedish Chancellor uttered his celebrated sarcasm on the governing capacities of Europe, the political Salon, as a state engine, was not yet in existence. What additional energy might it have given to his remark, had he known that the tea-table was the chapel of ease to the council-room, and gossip a new power in the state. Despotic governments are always curious about public opinion: they dread while affecting to despise it. They, however, make a far greater mistake than this, for they imagine its true exponent to be the society of the highest in rank and station.

It is not necessary to insist upon an error so palpable, and yet it is one of which nearly every Capital of Europe affords example; and the same council-chamber that would treat a popular movement with disdain, would tremble at the epigram launched by some "elegant" of society. The theory is, "that the masses *act*, but never *think:* the

higher ranks *think*, and set the rest in motion." Whether well or ill-founded, one consequence of the system is to inundate the world with a number of persons, who, no matter what their station or pretensions, are no other than Spies. If it be observed that, generally speaking, there is nothing worth recording—that society, too much engaged with its own vicissitudes, troubles itself little with those of the state; let it be remembered that the governments which employ these agencies are in a position to judge of the value of what they receive; and as they persevere in maintaining them, they are, doubtless, in some degree, remunerated.

To hold this high detective employ, a variety of conditions are essential. The individual must have birth and breeding to gain access to the highest circles; conciliating manners and ample means. If a lady, she is usually young, and a beauty, or has the fame of having once been such. The strangest part of all is, that her position is thoroughly appreciated. She is recognised everywhere for what she is; and yet her presence never seems to impose a restraint or suggest a caution. She becomes in re-

ality less a discoverer than a depositary of secrets. Many have something to communicate, and are only at a loss as to the channel. They have found out a political puzzle, hit a state blot, or unravelled a cabinet mystery. Others are in possession of some personal knowledge of royalty. They have marked the displeasure of the Queen Dowager, or seen the anger of the Crown Prince. Profitable as such facts are, they are nothing without a market. Thus it is that these characters exercise a wider sphere of influence than might be naturally ascribed to them, and possess besides a terrorising power over society, the chief members of which are at their mercy.

It is, doubtless, not a little humiliating that such should be the instruments of a government, and that Royalty should avail itself of such agencies; but the fact is so, and perhaps an inquiry into the secret working of democratic institutions might not make one a whit more proud of Popular Sovereignty.

Amongst the proficients in the great science we speak of, the Princess held the first place. Mysterious stories ran of her

acquaintance with affairs the most momentous: there were narratives of her complicity in even darker events. Her name was quoted by Savary in his secret report of the Emperor Paul's death—an allusion to her was made by one of the assassins of Murat—and a gloomy record of a celebrated incident in Louis Philippe's life ascribed to her a share in a terrible tragedy. Whether believed or not, they added to the prestige that attended her, and she was virtually a "puissance" in European politics.

To all the intriguists in state affairs her arrival was actually a boon. She could and would give them, out of her vast capital, enough to establish them successfully in trade. To the minister of police she brought accurate descriptions of suspected characters—the "signalements" of Carbonari that were threatening half the thrones of Europe. To the foreign secretary she brought tidings of the favour in which a great Emperor held him, and a shadowy vision of the grand cross he was one day to have. She had forbidden books for the cardinal confessor, and a case of smuggled cigars for the minister of finance. The picturesque language of

a *Journal de Modes* could alone convey the rare and curious details of dress which she imported for the benefit of the court ladies. In a word, she had something to secure her a welcome in every quarter—and all done with a tact and a delicacy that the most susceptible could not have resisted.

If the tone and manner of good society present little suitable to description, they are yet subjects of great interest to him who would study men in their moods of highest subtlety and astuteness. To mere passing careless observation, the reception of the Princess was a crowded gathering of a number of well-dressed people, in which the men were in far larger proportion than the other sex. There was abundance of courtesy; not a little of that half-flattering compliment which is the small change of intercourse: some —not much—scandal, and a fair share of small-talk. It was late when Sir Horace Upton entered, and, advancing to where the Princess stood, kissed her gloved hand with all the submissive deference of a courtier. The most lynx-eyed observer could not have detected either in his manner or in hers that any intimacy existed between them, much

less friendship; least of all, anything still closer. His bearing was a most studied and respectful homage—hers a haughty, but condescending acceptance of it; and yet, with all this, there was that in those around that seemed to say, "This man is more master here than any of us." He did not speak long with the Princess, but respectfully yielding his place to a later arrival, fell back into the crowd, and soon after took a seat beside one of the very few ladies who graced the reception. In all they were very few, we are bound to acknowledge; for although La Sabloukoff was received at court and all the embassies, they who felt, or affected to feel, any strictness on the score of morals, avoided rather than sought her intimacy.

She covered over what might have seemed this disparagement of her conduct, by always seeking the society of men, as though their hardy and vigorous intellects were more in unison with her own than the graceful attributes of the softer sex; and in this tone did the few lady-friends she possessed appear also to concur. It was their pride to discuss matters of state and politics; and whenever they condescended to more trifling

themes, they treated them with a degree of candour, and in a spirit that allowed men to speak as unreservedly as though no ladies were present.

Let us be forgiven for prolixity, since we are speaking less of individuals than of a school—a school, too, on the increase, and one whose results will be more widely felt than many are disposed to believe.

As the evening wore on, the guests bartered the news and *bons mots*—scraps of letters from royal hands were read—epigrams from illustrious characters repeated—racy bits of courtly scandal were related, and shrewd explanations hazarded as to how this was to turn out, and that was to end. It was a very strange language they talked—so much seemed left for inference—so much seemed left to surmise. There was a shadowy indistinctness, as it were, over all, and yet their manner showed a perfect and thorough appreciation of whatever went forward. Through all this treatment of great questions, one striking feature pre-eminently displayed itself—a keen appreciation of how much the individual characters, the passions, the prejudices, the very caprices

of men in power modified the acts of their governments; and thus you constantly heard such remarks as, "If the Duke of Wellington disliked the Emperor less—or, so long as Metternich has such an attachment to the Queen Dowager—when we get over Carini's dread of the Archduchess—or if we could only reconcile the Prince to a visit from Nesselrode"—showing that private personal feelings were swaying the minds of those whose contemplation might have seemed raised to a far loftier level. And then what a mass of very small gossip abounded—incidents so slight and insignificant that they only were lifted into importance by the actors in them being Kings and Kaisers! By what accidents great events were determined—on what mere trifles vast interests depended, it were, doubtless, no novelty to record: still it would startle many to be told that a casual pique, a passing word launched at hazard, some petty observance omitted or forgotten, have changed the destinies of whole nations.

It is in such circles as these that incidents of this kind are recounted. Each has some

anecdote, trivial and unimportant it may be, but still illustrating the life of those who live under the shadow of Royalty. The Princess herself was inexhaustible in these stores of secret biography; there was not a dynastic ambition to be consolidated by a marriage—not a Coburg alliance to patch up a family compact, that she was not well versed in. She detected in the vaguest movements plans and intentions, and could read the signs of a policy in indications that others would have passed without remark.

One by one the company retired, and at length Sir Horace found himself the last guest of the evening. Scarcely had the door closed on the last departure, when, drawing his arm-chair to the side of the fire opposite to that where the Princess sat, he took out his cigar-case, and selecting a cheroot, deliberately lighted and commenced to smoke it.

"I thought they'd never go," said she, with a sigh; "but I know why they remained—they all thought the Prince of Istria was coming. They saw his carriage stop here this evening, and heard he had

sent up to know if I received. I wrote on a card, 'To-morrow at dinner, at eight;' so be sure you are here to meet him."

Sir Horace bowed and smiled his acceptance.

"And your journey, dear Princess," said he between the puffs of his smoke, "was it pleasant?"

"It might have been well enough, but I was obliged to make a great détour. The Duchess detained me at Parma for some letters, and then sent me across the mountains of Pontremoli, a frightful road, on a secret mission to Massa."

"To Massa! of all earthly places."

"Even so. They had sent down there, some eight or nine months ago, the young Count Wahnsdorf, the Archduchess Sophia's son, who, having got into all manner of dissipation at Vienna, and lost largely at play, it was judged expedient to exile him for a season; and as the Duke of Modena offered his aid to their plans, he was named to a troop in a dragoon regiment, and appointed aide-de-camp to his Royal Highness. Are you attending? or has your Excellency lost the clue of my story?"

"I am all ears; only waiting anxiously to hear—who is she?"

"Oh, then, you suspect a woman in the case?"

"I'm sure of it, dear Princess. The very accents of your voice prepared me for a bit of romance."

"Yes, you are right; he has fallen in love, so desperately in love, that he is incessant in his appeals to the Duchess to intercede with his family and grant him leave to marry."

"To marry whom?" asked Sir Horace.

"That's the very question which he cannot answer himself; and when pressed for information, can only reply that 'she is an angel.' Now angels are not always of good family; they have sometimes very humble parents and very small fortunes."

"Helas!" sighed the diplomatist, pitifully.

"This angel, it would seem, is untraceable; she arrived with her mother, or what is supposed to be her mother, from Corsica; they landed at Spezzia, with an English passport, calling them Madame and Mademoiselle Harley. On arriving at Massa, they

took a villa close to the town, and established themselves with all the circumstance of people well off as to means. They, however, neither received visits nor made acquaintance with any one. They even so far withdrew themselves from public view, that they rarely left their own grounds, and usually took their carriage-airing at night. You are not attending, I see."

"On the contrary, I am an eager listener; only it is a story one has heard so often. I never heard of any one preserving the incognito except where disclosure would have revealed a shame."

"Your Excellency mistakes," replied she; "the incognito is sometimes like a feigned despatch in diplomacy, a means of awakening curiosity."

"Ces ruses ne se font plus, Princess, they were the fashion in Talleyrand's time; now we are satisfied to mystify by no meaning."

"If the weapons of the old school are not employed, there is another reason, perhaps," said she, with a dubious smile.

"That modern arms are too feeble to wield them, you mean," said he, bowing courteously. "Ah! it is but too true, Prin-

cess," and he sighed what might mean regret over the fact, or devotion to herself—perhaps both. At all events his submission served as a treaty of peace, and she resumed.

"And now, 'revenons à nos moutons,'" said she, "or at least to our lambs. This Wahnsdorf is quite capable of contracting a marriage without any permission, if they appear inclined to thwart him; and the question is, what can be done? The Duke would send these people away out of his territory, only that if they be English, as their passports imply, he knows that there will be no end of trouble with your amiable government, which is never paternal till some one corrects one of her children. If Wahnsdorf be sent away, where are they to send him? Besides, in all these cases, the creature carries his malady with him, and is sure to marry the first who sympathises with him. In a word, there were difficulties on all sides, and the Duchess sent me over, in observation, as they say, rather than with any direct plan of extrication."

"And you went?"

"Yes; I passed twenty-four hours. I couldn't stay longer, for I promised the Car-

dinal Caraffa to be in Rome on the 18th, about those Polish Nunneries. As to Massa, I gathered little more than I had heard beforehand. I saw their Villa; I even penetrated as far as the orangery in my capacity of traveller—the whole a perfect Paradise. I'm not sure I did not get a peep at Eve herself; at a distance, however. I made great efforts to obtain an interview, but all unsuccessfully. The police authorities managed to summon two of the servants to the Podesta, on pretence of some irregularity in their papers, but we obtained nothing out of them; and what is more, I saw clearly that nothing could be effected by a coup de main. The place requires a long siege, and I had not time for that."

"Did you see Wahnsdorf?"

"Yes; I had him to dinner with me alone at the Hotel, for, to avoid all observation, I only went to the Palace after nightfall. He confessed all his sins to me, and, like every other scapegrace, thought marriage was a grand absolution for past wickedness. He told me, too, how he made the acquaintance of these strangers. They were crossing the Magra with their carriage on a

raft, when the cable snapped and they were all carried down the torrent. He happened to be a passenger at the time, and did something very heroic, I've no doubt, but I cannot exactly remember what; but it amounted to either being, or being supposed to be, their deliverer. He thus obtained leave to pay his respects at the Villa; but even this gratitude was very measured: they only admitted him at rare intervals, and for a very brief visit. In fact, it was plain he had to deal with consummate tacticians, who turned the mystery of their seclusion and the honour vouchsafed him to an ample profit."

"He told them his name and his rank?"

"Yes; and he owned that they did not seem at all impressed by the revelation. He describes them as very haughty, very condescending in manner, 'très grandes dames,' in fact, but unquestionably born to the class they represent. They never dropped a hint of whence they had come, or any circumstance of their past lives; but seemed entirely engrossed by the present, which they spent principally in cultivating the arts; they both drew admirably, and the young

lady had become a most skilful modellist in clay, her whole day being passed in a studio which they had just built. I urged him strongly to try and obtain permission for me to see it, but he assured me it was hopeless—the request might even endanger his own position with them.

"I could perceive that though very much in love, Wahnsdorf was equally taken by the romance of this adventure. He had never been a hero to himself before, and he was perfectly enchanted by the novelty of the sensation. He never affected to say that he had made the least impression on the young lady's heart; but he gave me to understand that the nephew of an Emperor need not trouble his head much on that score. He is a very good-looking, well-mannered, weak boy, who, if he only reach the age of thirty without some great blunder, will pass for a very dignified Prince for the rest of his life."

"Did you give him any hopes?"

"Of course, if he only promised to follow my counsels; and as these same counsels are yet in the oven, he must needs wait for them.

In a word, he is to write to me everything, and I to him; and so we parted."

"I should like to see these people," said Upton, languidly.

"I'm sure of it," rejoined she; "but it is perhaps unnecessary;" and there was that in the tone which made the words very significant.

"Chelmsford—he's now Secretary at Turin—might perhaps trace them," said he; "he always knows everything of those people who are secrets to the rest of the world."

"For the present I am disposed to think it were better not to direct attention towards them," replied she. "What we do here must be done adroitly, and in such a way as that it can be disavowed if necessary, or abandoned if unsuccessful."

"Said with all your own tact, Princess," said Sir Horace, smiling. "I can perceive, however, that you have a plan in your head already. Is it not so?"

"No," said she, with a faint sigh; "I took wonderfully little interest in the affair. It was one of those games where the combinations are so few you don't condescend to learn it. Are you aware of the hour?"

"Actually three o'clock," said he, standing up. "Really, Princess, I am quite shocked."

"And so am I," said she, smiling; "'on se compromet si facilement dans ce bas monde.' Good night." And she curtseyed and withdrew before he had time to take his hat and retire.

CHAPTER V.

A DUKE AND HIS MINISTER.

In this age of the world, when everybody has been everywhere, seen everything, and talked with everybody, it may savour of an impertinence if we ask of our reader if he has ever been at Massa. It may so chance that he has not, and, if so, as assuredly has he yet an untasted pleasure before him.

Now, to be sure, Massa is not as it once was. The little Duchy, whose capital it formed, has been united to a larger state. The distinctive features of a metropolis, and the residence of a sovereign prince, are gone. The life, and stir, and animation which surround a court have subsided; grass-grown streets and deserted squares replace the busy movement of former days; a dreamy weariness seems to have fallen over every one, as

though life offered no more prizes for exertion, and that the day of ambition was set for ever. Yet are there features about the spot which all the chances and changes of political fortune cannot touch. Dynasties may fall, and thrones crumble, but the eternal Apennines will still rear their snow-clad summits towards the sky. Along the vast plain of ancient olives the perfumed wind will still steal at evening, and the blue waters of the Mediterranean plash lazily among the rocks, over which the myrtle and the arbutus are hanging. There, amidst them all, half hid in clustering vines, bathed in soft odours from orange groves, with plashing fountains glittering in the sun, and foaming streams gushing from the sides of marble mountains, there stands Massa—ruined, decayed, and deserted; but beautiful in all its desolation, and fairer to gaze on than many a scene where the tide of human fortune is at the flood.

As you wander there now, passing the deep arch over which, hundreds of feet above you, the ancient fortress frowns, and enter the silent streets, you would find it somewhat difficult to believe how, a very few years

back, this was the brilliant residence of a court—the gay resort of strangers from every land of Europe—that showy equipages traversed these weed-grown squares, and high-born dames swept proudly beneath these leafy alleys. Hard, indeed, to fancy the glittering throng of courtiers, the merry laughter of light-hearted beauty, beneath these trellised shades, where, moodily and slow, some solitary figure now steals along, "pondering sad thoughts over the bygone!"

But a few, a very few years ago, and Massa was in the plenitude of its prosperity. The revenues of the state were large—more than sufficient to have maintained all that such a city could require, and nearly enough to gratify every caprice of a prince whose costly tastes ranged over every theme, and found in each a pretext for reckless expenditure. He was one of those men whom Nature having gifted largely, "takes out" the compensation by a disposition of instability and fickleness that renders every acquirement valueless. He could have been anything—orator, poet, artist, soldier, statesman; and yet, in the very diversity of his abilities, there was that want of fixity of purpose,

that left him ever short of success, till he himself, wearied by repeated failures, distrusted his own powers, and ceased to exert them.

Such a man, under the hard pressure of a necessity, might have done great things; as it was, born to a princely station, and with a vast fortune, he became a reckless spendthrift—a dreamy visionary at one time, an enthusiastic dilettante at another. There was not a scheme of government he had not eagerly embraced and abandoned in turn. He had attracted to his little capital all that Europe could boast of artistic excellence, and as suddenly he had thrown himself into the most intolerant zeal of Papal persecution —denouncing every species of pleasure, and ordaining a more than monastic self-denial and strictness. There was only one mode of calculating what he might be, which was, by imagining the very opposite to what he then was. Extremes were his delight, and he undulated between Austrian tyranny and democratic licentiousness in politics, just as he vacillated between the darkest bigotry of his church and open infidelity.

At the time when we desire to present

him to our readers (the exact year is not material), he was fast beginning to weary of an interregnum of asceticism and severity. He had closed theatres, and suppressed all public rejoicings; and for an entire winter he had sentenced his faithful subjects to the unbroken sway of the Priest and the Friar; a species of rule which had banished all strangers from the Duchy, and threatened, by the injury to trade, the direst consequences to his Capital. To have brought the question formally before him in all its details would have ensured the downfal of any minister rash enough for such daring. There was, indeed, but one man about the court who had courage for the enterprise; and to him we would devote a few lines as we pass. He was an Englishman, named Stubber. He had originally come out to Italy with horses for his Highness, and been induced, by good offers of employment, to remain. He was not exactly stable-groom, nor trainer, nor was he of the dignity of master of the stables; but he was something whose attributes included a little of all, and something more. One thing he assuredly was: a consummately clever fellow, who

could apply all his native Yorkshire shrewdness to a new sphere; and make of his homespun faculties the keen intelligence by which he could guide himself in novel and difficult circumstances.

A certain freedom of speech, with a bold hardihood of character, based, it is true, upon a conscious sense of honour, had brought him more than once under the notice of the Prince. His Highness felt such pleasure in the outspoken frankness of the man, that he frequently took opportunities of conversing with him, and even asking his advice. Never deterred by the subject, whatever it was, Stubber spoke out his mind, and by the very force of strong native sense, and an unswerving power of determination, soon impressed his master that his best counsels were to be had from the Yorkshire jockey, and not from the decorated and gilded throng who filled the ante-chambers.

To elevate the groom to the rank of personal attendant; to create him a Chevalier and then a Count, were all easy steps to such a Prince. At the time we speak of, Stubber was chief of the cabinet—the trusted adviser of his master in the knottiest questions of

foreign politics, the arbiter of the most difficult points with other states, the highest authority in home affairs, and the absolute ruler over the Duke's household and all who belonged to it. He was one of those men of action who speedily distinguish themselves wherever the game of life is being played: smart to discern the character of those around him, prompt to avail himself of their knowledge, little hampered by the scruples which conventionalities impose on men bred in a higher station, he generally attained his object before others had arranged their plans to oppose him. To these qualities he added a rugged, unflinching honesty, and a loyal attachment to the person of his Prince. Strong in his own conscious rectitude, and in the confiding regard of his sovereign, Stubber stood alone against all the wiles and machinations of his formidable rivals.

Were we giving a history of this curious court and its intrigues, we could relate some strange stories of the mechanism by which states are ruled. We have, however, no other business with the subject than as it enters into the domain of our own story, and to this we return.

It was a calm evening of the early autumn, as the Prince, accompanied by Stubber alone, and unattended by even a groom, rode along one of the alleys of the olive wood which skirts the sea-shore beneath Massa. His Highness was unusually moody and thoughtful, and as he sauntered carelessly along, seemed scarcely to notice the objects about him.

"What month are we in, Stubber?" asked he, at length.

"September, Altezza," was the short reply.

"Per Bacco! so it is; and in this very month we were to have been in Bohemia with the Archduke Stephen—the best shooting in all Europe, and the largest stock of pheasants in the whole world, perhaps; and I, that love field-sports as no man ever loved them! Eh, Stubber?" and he turned abruptly round to seek a confirmation of what he asserted. Either Stubber did not fully agree in the judgment, or did not deem it necessary to record his concurrence; but the Prince was obliged to reiterate his statement, adding, "I might say, indeed, it

is the one solitary dissipation I have ever permitted myself."

Now this was a stereotyped phrase of his Highness, and employed by him respecting music, literature, field-sports, picture buying, equipage, play, and a number of other pursuits not quite so pardonable, in each of which, for the time, his zeal would seem to be exclusive.

A scarcely audible ejaculation—a something like a grunt—from Stubber, was the only assent to this proposition.

"And here I am," added the Prince, testily, "the only man of my rank in Europe, perhaps, without society, amusement, or pleasure, condemned to the wearisome details of a petty administration, and actually a slave—yes, sir, I say, a slave——What the deuce is this? My horse is sinking above his pasterns. Where are we, Stubber?" and with a vigorous dash of the spurs he extricated himself from the deep ground.

"I often told your Highness that these lands were ruined for want of drainage. You may remark how poor the trees are along here; the fruit, too, is all deteriorated—all for want of a little skill and industry. And,

if your Highness remarked the appearance of the people in that village, every second man has the ague on him."

"They did look very wretched. And why is it not drained? Why isn't everything done as it ought, Stubber, eh?"

"Why isn't your Highness in Bohemia?"

"Want of means, my good Stubber; no money. My man, Landelli, tells me the coffer is empty; and until this new tax on the Colza comes in, we shall have to live on our credit, or our wits—I forget which, but I conclude they are about equally productive."

"Landelli is a ladro," said Stubber. "He has money enough to build a new wing to his château in Serravezza, and to give fifty thousand scudi of fortune to his daughter, though he can't afford your Highness the common necessaries of your station."

"Per Bacco! Billy, you are right; you must look into these accounts yourself. They always confuse me."

"I *have* looked into them, and your Highness shall have two hundred thousand francs to-morrow on your dressing-table, and as much more within the week."

"Well done, Billy; you are the only fellow who can unmask these rogueries. If I had only had you with me long ago! Well! well! well! it is too late to think of it. What shall we do with this money? Bohemia is out of the question now. Shall we rebuild the San Felice? It is really too small; the stage is crowded with twenty people on it. There's that gate towards Carrara—when is it to be completed?—there's a figure wanted for the centre pedestal. As for the fountain, it must be done by the municipality. It is essentially the interest of the townspeople. You'd advise me to spend the money in draining these low lands, or in a grant to that new company for a pier at Marina; but I'll not; I have other thoughts in my head. Why should not this be the centre of art to the whole Peninsula? Carrara is a city of sculptors. Why not concentrate their efforts here—by a gallery? I have myself some glorious things—the best group Canova ever modelled—the original Ariadne, too—far finer than the thing people go to see at Frankfort. Then there's Tanderini's Shepherd with the Goats. Who lives yonder, Stubber? What a beautiful

garden it is!" And he drew up short in front of a villa, whose grounds were terraced in a succession of gardens, down to the very margin of the sea. Plants and shrubs of other climates were mingled with those familiar to Italy, making up a picture of singular beauty, by diversity of colour and foliage. "Isn't this the 'Ombretta,' Stubber?"

"Yes, Altezza; but the Morelli have left it. It is let now to a stranger—a French lady. Some call her English, I believe."

"To be sure; I remember. There was a demand about a formal permission to reside here. Landelli advised me not to sign it—that she might turn out English, or have some claim upon England, which was quite equivalent to placing the Duchy, and all within it, under that blessed thing they call British protection."

"There are worse things than even that," muttered Stubber.

"British occupation perhaps you mean; well, you may be right. At all events, I did not take Landelli's advice, for I gave the permission, and I have never heard more of her. She must be rich, I take it. See what

order this place is kept in; that conservatory is very large indeed, and the orange-trees are finer than ours."

"They seem very fine, indeed," said Stubber.

"I say, sir, that we have none such at the Palace. I'll wager a zecchino they have come from Naples. And look at that magnolia: I tell you, Stubber, this garden is very far superior to ours."

"Your Highness has not been in the Palace gardens lately, perhaps. I was there this morning, and they are really in admirable order."

"I'll have a peep inside of these grounds, Stubber," said the Duke, who, no longer attentive to the other, only followed out his own train of thought. At the same instant he dismounted, and, without giving himself any trouble about his horse, made straight for a small wicket which lay invitingly open in front of him. The narrow skirting of copse passed, the Duke at once found himself in the midst of a lovely garden, laid out with consummate skill and taste, and offering at intervals the most beautiful views of

the surrounding scenery. Although much of what he beheld around him was the work of many years, there were abundant traces of innovation and improvement. Some of the statues were recently placed, and a small temple of Grecian architecture seemed to have been just restored. A heavy curtain hung across the doorway; drawing back which, the Duke entered what he at once perceived to be a sculptor's studio. Casts and models lay carelessly about, and a newly begun group stood enshrouded in the wetted drapery with which artists clothe their unfinished labours. No mean artist himself, the Duke examined critically the figures before him; nor was he long in perceiving that the artist had committed more than one fault in drawing and proportion. "This is amateur work," said he to himself; "and yet not without cleverness and a touch of genius too. Your dilettante scorns anatomy, and will not submit to drudgery; hence, here are muscles incorrectly developed, and their action ill expressed." So saying, he sat down before the model, and taking up one of the tools at his side, began to correct some of the errors in the work.

It was exactly the kind of task for which his skill adapted him. Too impatient and too discursive to accomplish anything of his own, he was admirably fitted to correct the faults of another, and so he worked away vigorously —totally forgetting where he was, how he had come there, and as utterly oblivious of Stubber, whom he had left without. Growing more and more interested as he proceeded, he arose at length to take a better view of what he had done, and, standing some distance off, exclaimed aloud, "Per Bacco! I have made a good thing of it—there's life in it now!"

"So indeed is there," cried a gentle voice behind him; and turning he beheld a young and very beautiful girl, whose dress was covered by the loose blouse of a sculptor. "How I thank you for this!" said she, blushing deeply, as she curtseyed before him. "I have had no teaching; and never till this moment knew how much I needed it."

"And this is your work, then?" said the Duke, who turned again towards the model. "Well, there is promise in it. There is even more. Still you have hard labour before you, if you would be really an artist.

There is a grammar in these things, and he who would speak the tongue must get over the declensions. I know but little myself——"

"Oh, do not say so!" cried she, eagerly; "I feel that I am in a master's presence."

The Duke started, partly struck by the energy of her manner, in part by the words themselves. It is often difficult for men in his station to believe that they are not known and recognised, and so he stood wondering at her, and thinking who she could be that did not know him to be the Prince. "You mistake me," said he, gently, and with that dignity which is the birthright of those born to command. "I am but a very indifferent artist. I have studied a little, it is true; but other pursuits and idleness have swept away the small knowledge I once possessed, and left me, as to art, pretty much as I am in morals—that is, I know what is right, but very often I can't accomplish it."

"You are from Carrara, I conclude?" said the young girl, timidly, still curious to hear more about him.

"Pardon me!" said he, smiling; "I am a native of Massa, and live here."

"And are you not a sculptor by profession?" asked she, still more eagerly.

"No," said he, laughing pleasantly; "I follow a more precarious trade, nor can I mould the clay I work in so deftly."

"At least you love art," said she, with an enthusiasm heightened by the changes he had effected in her group.

"Now it is my turn to question, Signorina," said he, gaily. "Why, with a talent like yours, have you not given yourself to regular study? You live in a land where instruction should not be difficult to obtain. Carrara is one vast studio; there must be many there who would not alone be willing but even proud to have such a pupil. Have you never thought of this?"

"I have thought of it," said she, pensively, "but my aunt, with whom I live, desires to see no one, to know no one;—even now," added she, blushing deeply, "I find myself conversing with an utter stranger, in a way——" She stopped overwhelmed with confusion, and he finished her sentence for her.

"In a way which shows how naturally a love of art establishes a confidence between

those who profess it." As he spoke, the curtain was drawn back, and a lady entered, who, though several years older, bore such a likeness to the young girl that she might readily have been taken for her sister.

"It is at length time I should make my excuses for this intrusion, madame," said he, turning towards her; and then in a few words explained how the accidental passing by the spot, and the temptation of the open wicket, had led him to a trespass, "which," added he, smiling, "I can only say I shall be charmed if you will condescend to retaliate. I, too, have some objects of art, and gardens which are thought worthy of a visit."

"We live here, sir, apart from the world. It is for that reason we have selected this residence," replied she, coldly.

"I shall respect your seclusion, madame," answered he, with a deep bow, "and only beg once more to tender my sincere apologies for the past." He moved towards the door as he spoke, the ladies curtseyed deeply, and, with a still lowlier reverence, he passed out.

The Duke lingered in the garden, as though unwilling to leave the spot. For a while

some doubt as to whether he had been recognised passed through his mind, but he soon satisfied himself that such was not the case, and the singularity of the situation amused him.

"I am culling a souvenir, madame," said he, plucking a moss-rose as the lady passed.

"I will give you a better one, sir," said she, detaching one from her bouquet, and handing it to him. And so they parted.

"Per Bacco! Stubber, I have seen two very charming women. They are evidently persons of condition; find out all about them, and let me hear it to-morrow." And so saying, his Highness rode away, thinking pleasantly over his adventure, and fancying a hundred ways in which it might be amusingly carried out. The life of princes is rarely fertile in surprises; perhaps, therefore, the uncommon and unusual are the pleasantest of all their sensations.

CHAPTER VI.

ITALIAN TROUBLES.

STUBBER knew his master well. There was no need for any "perquisitions" on his part; the ladies, the studio, and the garden were totally forgotten ere nightfall. Some rather alarming intelligence had arrived from Carrara, which had quite obliterated every memory of his late adventure. That little town of artists had long been the resort of an excited class of politicians, and it was more than rumoured that the "Carbonari" had established there a lodge of their order. Inflammatory placards had been posted through the town—violent denunciations of the Government—vengeance, even on the head of the sovereign, openly proclaimed, and a speedy day promised when the wrongs of an enslaved people should be avenged in

blood. The messenger who brought the alarming tidings to Massa carried with him many of the inflammatory documents, as well as several knives and poniards, discovered by the activity of the police in a ruined building at the sea-shore. No arrests had as yet been made, but the authorities were in possession of information with regard to various suspicious characters, and the police prepared to act at a moment's notice.

It was an hour after midnight when the Council met, and the Duke sat, pale, agitated, and terrified, at the table, with Landelli, the Prime Minister, Caprini, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and General Ferrucio, the War Minister, a venerable ecclesiastic, Monsignore Abbati, occupying the lowest place in virtue of his humble station as confessor of his Highness. He who of all others enjoyed his master's confidence, and whose ready intelligence was most needed in the emergency, was not present; his title of Minister of the Household not qualifying him for a place at the Council.

Whatever the result, the deliberation was a long one. Even while it continued, there was time to despatch a courier to Car-

rara, and receive the answer he brought back; and when the Duke returned to his room, it was already far advanced in the morning. Fatigued and harassed, he dismissed his valet at once, and desired that Stubber might attend him. When he arrived, however, his Highness had fallen off asleep, and lay, dressed as he was, on his bed.

Stubber sat noiselessly beside his master, his mind deeply pondering over the events which, although he had not been present at the Council, had all been related to him. It was not the first time he had heard of that formidable conspiracy, which, under the title of the Carbonari, had established themselves in every corner of Europe.

In the days of his humbler fortune he had known several of them intimately; he had been often solicited to join their band; but while steadily refusing this, he had detected much which to his keen intelligence savoured of treachery to the cause amongst them. This cause was necessarily recruited from those whose lives rejected all honest and patient labour. They were the disappointed men of every station, from the highest to the lowest. The ruined gentleman—the beg-

gared noble — the bankrupt trader, the houseless artisan—the homeless vagabond, were all there; bold, daring, and energetic, fearless as to the present, reckless as to the future. They sought for any change, no matter what, seeing that in the convulsion their own condition must be bettered. Few troubled their heads how these changes were to be accomplished; they cared little for the real grievances they assumed to redress—their work was demolition. It was to the hour of pillage alone they looked for the recompense of their hardihood. Some, unquestionably, took a different view of the agencies and the objects; dreamy, speculative men, with high aspirations, hoped that the cruel wrongs which tyranny inflicted on many a European state might be effectually curbed by a glorious freedom—when each man's actions should be made conformable to the benefit of the community, and the will of all be typified in the conduct of each. There was, however, another class, and to these Stubber had given deep attention. It was a party whose singular activity and energy were always in the ascendant—ever suggesting bold measures whose results could

scarcely be more than menaces, and advocating actions whose greatest effect could not rise above acts of terror and dismay. And thus while the leaders plotted great political convulsions, and the masses dreamed of sack and pillage, these latter dealt in acts of assassination—the vengeance of the poniard and the poison-cup. These were the men Stubber had studied with no common attention. He fancied he saw in them neither the dupes of their own excited imaginations, nor the reckless followers of rapine, but an order of men equal to the former by intelligence, but far transcending the last in crime and infamy. In his own early experiences he had perceived that more than one of these had expatriated themselves suddenly, carrying away to foreign shores considerable wealth, and that, too, under circumstances where the acquisition of property seemed scarcely possible. Others he had seen as suddenly throwing off their political associates, rise into stations of rank and power; and one memorable case he knew, where the individual had become the chief adviser of the very state whose destruction he had sworn to accomplish. Such a

one he now fancied he had detected among the advisers of his Prince, and deeply ruminating on this theme, he sat at the bedside.

"Is it a dream, Stubber, or have we really heard bad news from Carrara? Has Fraschetti been stabbed or not?"

"Yes, your Highness, he has been stabbed, exactly two inches below where he was wounded in September last—then, it was his pocket-book saved him; now, it was your Highness's picture, which, like a faithful follower, he always carried about him."

"Which means, that you disbelieve the whole story."

"Every word of it."

"And the poniards found at the Bocca di Magra?"

"Found by those who placed them there."

"And the proclamations?"

"Blundering devices. See, here is one of them, printed on the very paper supplied to the Government offices. There's the water mark, with the crown and your own cypher on it."

"Per Bacco! so it is. Let me show this to Landelli."

"Wait awhile, your Highness; let us trace this a little further. No arrests have been made?"

"None."

"Nor will any. The object in view is already gained; they have terrified you, and secured the next move."

"What do you mean?"

"Simply, that they have persuaded you that this state is the hotbed of revolutionists; that your own means of security and repression are unequal to the emergency; that disaffection exists in the army; and that, whether for the maintenance of the Government or your safety, you have only one course remaining."

"Which is——"

"To call in the Austrians."

"Per Bacco! it is exactly what they have advised. How did you come to know it? Who is the traitor at the Council-board?"

"I wish I could tell you the name of one who was not such. Why, your Highness, these fellows are not *your* Ministers, except in so far as they are paid by you. They are Metternich's people; they receive their appointments from Vienna, and are only ac-

countable to the cabinet held at Schoenbrunn. If wise and moderate counsels prevailed here—if our financial measures prospered—if the people were happy and contented—how long, think you, would Lombardy submit to be ruled by the rod and the bayonet? Do you imagine that *you* will be suffered to give an example to the Peninsula of a good administration?"

"But so it is," broke in the Prince; "I defy any man to assert the opposite. The country *is* prosperous, the people *are* contented, the laws justly administered, and, I hesitate not to say, myself as popular as any sovereign of Europe."

"And I tell your Highness, just as distinctly, that the country is ground down with taxation, even to export duties on the few things we have to export—that the people are poor to the very verge of starvation—that if they do not take to the highways as brigands, it is because some traditions as honest men yet survive amongst them—that the laws only exist as an agent of tyranny, arrest and imprisonment being at the mere caprice of the authorities. Nor is there a means by which an innocent man can demand

his trial, and insist on being confronted with his accuser. Your gaols are full, crowded to a state of pestilence with supposed political offenders, men that, in a free country, would be at large, toiling industriously for their families, and whose opinions could never be dangerous, if not festering in the foul air of a dungeon. And as to *your own* popularity, all I say is, don't walk in the Piazza at Carrara after dusk. No, nor even at noonday."

"And you dare to speak thus to *me*, Stubber!" said the Prince, his face covered with a deadly pallor as he spoke, and his white lips trembling, but less in passion than in fear.

"And why not, sir? Of what value could such a man as I am be to your service, if I were not to tell you what you'll never hear from others—the plain, simple truth? Is it not clear enough that if I only thought of my own benefit, I'd say whatever you'd like best to hear?—I'd tell you, like Landelli, that the taxes were well paid, or say, as Cerreccio did, t'other day, that your army would do credit to any state in Europe, when he well knew at the time that the artillery was in mutiny from arrears of pay, and the cavalry horses dying from short rations!"

"I am well weary of all this," said the Duke, with a sigh. "If the half of what I hear of my kingdom every day be but true, my lot in life is worse than a galley-slave's. One assures me that I am bankrupt; another calls me a vassal of Austria; a third makes me out a Papal spy; and *you* aver that if I venture into the streets of my own town, in the midst of my own people, I am almost sure to be assassinated!"

"Take no man's word, sir, for what, while you can see for yourself, it is your own duty to ascertain," said Stubber, resolutely. "If you really only desire a life of ease and indolence, forgetting what you owe to yourself and those you rule over, send for the Austrians. Ask for a brigade and a general. You'll have them for the asking. They'd come at a word, and try your people at the drum-head, and flog and shoot them with as little disturbance to you as need be. You may pension off the judges; for a court-martial is a far speedier tribunal, and a corporal's guard is quite an economy in criminal justice. Trade will not, perhaps, prosper with martial law, nor is a state of siege thought favourable to commerce. No matter.

You'll sleep safe so long as you keep within doors, and the band under your window will rouse the spirit of nationality in your heart, as it plays, 'God preserve the Emperor!'"

"You forget yourself, sir, and you forget *me!*" said the Duke, sternly, as he drew himself up, and threw a look of insolent pride at the speaker.

"Mayhap I do, your Highness," was the ready answer, "and out of that very forgetfulness let your Highness take a warning. I say, once more, I distrust the people about you; and as to this conspiracy at Carrara, I'll wager a round sum on it, that it was hatched on t'other side of the Alps, and paid for in good florins of the Holy Roman Empire. At all events, give me time to investigate the matter. Let me have till the end of the week to examine into it, and, if I find nothing to confirm my views, I'll say not one word against all the measures of precaution that your Council are bent on importing from Austria."

"Take your own way; I promise nothing," said the Duke, haughtily; and, with a motion of his hand, dismissed his adviser.

CHAPTER VII.

CARRARA.

To all the luxuriant vegetation and cultivated beauty of Massa, glowing in the "golden glories" of its orange groves — steeped in the perfume of its thousand gardens—Carrara offers the very strongest contrast. Built in a little cleft of the Apennines, it is begirt with great mountains—wild, barren, and desolate,—some, dark and precipitous, have no traces in their sides but those of the torrents which are formed by the melting snows; others show the white caves, as they are called, of that pure marble which has made the name of the spot famous throughout Europe. High in the mountain sides, escarped amidst rocks, and zig-zagging over many a dangerous gorge and deep abyss, are the rough roads trodden by the

weary oxen—trailing along their massive loads, and straining their stout chests to drag the great white blocks of glittering stone. Far down below, crossed and re-crossed by splashing torrents, sprinkled with the spray of a hundred cataracts, stands Carrara itself,—a little marble city of art, —every house a studio, every citizen a sculptor. Hither are sent all the marvellous conceptions of genius—the models which mighty imaginations have begotten, to be converted into imperishable stone. Here are the grand conceptions gathered for every land and clime, treasures destined to adorn the great galleries of nations, or the splendid palaces of kings.

Some of these studios are of imposing size and vast proportions, and not devoid of a certain architectural pretension—a group, a figure, or a bas-relief usually adorning the space over the door; and by its subject giving some indication of the tastes of the proprietor. Thus Madonnas and saints are of frequent occurrence; and the majority of the artists display their faith by an image of the saint whose patronage they claim. Others exhibit some ideal conception; and

a few denote their nationality by the bust of their sovereign, or some prince of his house.

One of these buildings, a short distance from the town, and so small as to be little more than a mere crypt, was distinguished by the chaste and simple elegance of its design, and the tasteful ornament with which its owner had decorated the most minute details of the building. He was a young artist, who had arrived in Carrara friendless and unknown, but whose abilities had soon obtained for him consideration and employment. At first, the tasks entrusted to him were the humbler ones of friezes and decorative art; but at length, his skill becoming acknowledged, to his hands were confided the choicest conceptions of Danneker—the most rare creations of Canova. Little or nothing was known of him; his habits were of the strictest seclusion,—he went into no society, he formed no friendships. His solitary life, after a while, ceased to attract any notice; and men saw him pass, and come and go, without question,—almost without greeting; and, save when some completed work was about to be packed off to its des-

tination, the name of Sebastian Greppi was rarely heard in Carrara.

His strict retirement had not, however, exempted him from the jealous suspicions of the authorities; on the contrary, the seeming mystery of his life had sharpened their curiosity and aroused their zeal; and more than once was he summoned to the Prefecture to answer some frivolous questions about his passport or his means of subsistence.

It was on one of these errands that he stood one morning in the ante-chamber of the Podesta's court, awaiting his turn to be called and interrogated. The heat of a crowded chamber, the wearisome delay,—perhaps, too, some vexation at the frequency of these irritating calls—had partially excited him; and when he was at length introduced, his manner was confused, his replies vague and almost wandering.

Two strangers, whose formal permissions to reside were then being filled up by a clerk, were accommodated with seats in the room, and listened with no slight interest to a course of inquiry so strange and novel to their ears.

"Greppi!" cried the harsh voice of the President, "come forward;" and a youth stood up, dressed in the blue blouse of a common workman, and wearing the coarse shoes of the very humblest labourer; but yet, in the calm dignity of his mien and the mild character of his sad but handsome features, already proclaiming that he came of a class whose instincts denote good blood.

"Greppi, you have a servant, it would seem, whose name is not in your passport. How is this?"

"He is an humble friend who shares my fortunes, sir," said the artist. "They asked no passport from him when we crossed the Tuscan frontier; and he has been here some months without any demand for one."

"Does he assist you in your work?"

"He does, sir, by advice and counsel; but he is not a sculptor. Poor fellow! he never dreamed that his presence here could have attracted any remark."

"His tongue and accent betray a foreign origin, Greppi?"

"Be it so,—so do mine, perhaps. Are we the less submissive to the laws?"

"The laws can make themselves re-

spected," said the Podesta, sternly. "Where is this man,—how is he called?"

"He is known as Guglielmo, sir. At this moment he is ill,—he has caught the fever of the Campagna, and is confined to bed."

"We shall send to ascertain the fact," was the reply.

"Then my word is doubted!" said the youth, haughtily.

The Podesta started, but more in amazement than anger. There was, indeed, enough to astonish him in the haughty ejaculation of the poorly-clad boy.

"I am given to believe that you are not —as your passport would imply—a native of Capri, nor a Neapolitan born," said the Podesta.

"If my passport be regular and my conduct blameless, what have you or any one to do with my birthplace? Is there any charge alleged against me?"

"You are forgetting where you are, boy; but I may take measures to remind you of it," said the Podesta, whispering to a sergeant of the gendarmes at his side.

"I hope I have said nothing that could offend you," said the boy, eagerly; "I

scarcely know what I have said. My wish is to submit myself in all obedience to the laws; to live quietly and follow my trade. If my presence here give displeasure to the authorities, I will, however sorry, take my departure, though I cannot say whither to." The last words were uttered falteringly, and in a kind of soliloquy, and only overheard by the two strangers, who now, having received their papers, arose to withdraw.

"Will you call at our inn and speak with us? that's my card," said one, as he passed out, and gave a visiting-card into the youth's hand.

He took it without a word: indeed, he was too deeply engaged in his own thoughts to pay much attention to the request.

"The sergeant will accompany you, my good youth, to your lodgings, and verify what you have stated as to your companion. To-morrow you will appear here again, to answer certain questions we shall put to you as to your subsistence, and the means by which you live."

"Is it a crime to have wherewithal to subsist upon?" asked the boy.

"He whose means of living are dispro-

portionate to his evident station may well be an object of suspicion," said the other, with a sneer.

"And who is to say what is my station, or what becomes it? Will *you* take upon you to pronounce upon the question?" cried the boy, boldly.

"Mayhap it is what I shall do very soon!" was the calm answer.

"Then let me have done with this. I'll leave the place as soon as my friend be able to bear removal."

"Even that I'll not promise for."

"Why, you'll not detain me here by force?" exclaimed the youth.

A cold, ambiguous smile was the only reply he received to this speech.

"Well, let us see when this restraint is to begin," cried the boy, passionately, as he moved toward the door; but no impediment was offered to his departure. On the contrary, the servant, at a signal from the Prefect, threw wide the two sides of the folding-doors, and the youth passed out, down the stairs, and into the street.

His mind obscured by passion, his heart bursting with indignation, he threaded his

way through many a narrow lane and alley, till he reached a small rustic bridge, crossing over which he ascended a narrow flight of steps cut in the solid rock, and gained a little terrace, on which stood a small cottage of the humblest kind.

As usual in Italy, during the summer-time, the glass sashes of the windows had been removed, and the shutters closed. Opening one of these gently with his hand, he peeped in, and as suddenly a voice cried out, "Are you come back? Oh, how my heart was aching to see you here again! Come in quickly, and let me touch your hand."

The next moment the boy was seated by the bed, where lay a man greatly emaciated by sickness, and bearing in his worn features the traces of a severe tertian.

"It's going off now," said he, "but the fit was a long one. This morning it began at eight o'clock; but I'm throwing it off now, and I'll soon be better."

"My poor fellow," said the boy, caressing the cold fingers within his own hands, "it was in these midnight rambles of mine you caught the terrible malady. As it ever has been, your fidelity is fatal to you. I told

you a thousand times that I was born to hard luck, and carried more than enough to swamp all who might try to succour me."

"And don't I say, as the ould heathen philosopher did of fortune, "Nullum numen habes, si sit prudentia?'" Is it necessary to say that the speaker was Billy Traynor, and the boy his pupil?

"Prudentia," said the youth, scoffingly, "may mean anything from trickery to downright meanness; since, by such acts as these, men grow great in life. Prudentia is thrift and self-denial; but it is more, too—it is a compromise between a man's dignity and his worldly success—it is the compact that says, bear *this*, that *that* may happen—and so I'll none of it."

"Tell me how you fared with the Prefect," asked Billy.

"You shall hear, and judge for yourself," said the other; and related, as well as his memory would serve him, the circumstances of his late interview.

"Well! well!" said Billy, "it might be worse."

"I knew you'd say so, poor fellow," said the youth, affectionately; "you accept the

rubs of life as cheerfully as I take them with impatience. But, after all, this is matter of temperament too. *You* can forgive—*I* love better to resist."

"Mine is the better philosophy though," said Billy, "since it will last one's lifetime. Forgiveness must dignify old age, when your virtue of resistance be no longer possible."

"I never wish to reach the time when I may be too old for it," said the boy, passionately.

"Hush, don't say that. It's not for you to determine how long you are to live, nor in what frame of mind years are to find you." He paused, and there was a long unbroken silence between them.

"I have been at the post," said the youth at last, "and found that letter which, by the Neapolitan post-mark, must have been despatched many weeks since."

Billy Traynor took up the letter, whose seal was yet unbroken, and having examined it carefully, returned it to him, saying, "You didn't answer his last, I think?"

"No; and I half hoped he might have felt offended, and given up the correspondence. What have we to do with ambassa-

dors or great ministers, Billy? Ours is not the grand highway in life, but the humble path on the mountain side."

"I'm content if it only lead upwards," said the sick man; and the words were uttered firmly, but with the solemn fervour of prayer.

CHAPTER VIII.

A NIGHT SCENE.

As young Massy—for so we like best to call him—sat with the letter in his hand, a card fell to the ground from between his fingers, and taking it up he read the name, Lord Selby.

"What does this mean, Billy?" asked he; "whom can it belong to? Oh, I remember now. There were some strangers at the Podesta's office this morning, when I was there; and one of them asked me to call at this inn, and speak with them."

"He has seen 'the Alcibiades,'" exclaimed Billy, eagerly. "He has been at the studio?"

"How should he?" rejoined the youth. "I have not been there myself for two days: here is the key!"

"He has heard of it, then—of that I'm certain; since he could not be in the town here an hour, without some one telling him of it."

Massy smiled half sadly, and shook his head.

"Go and see him at all events," said Billy; "and be sure to put on your coat and a hat, for one wouldn't know what ye were at all, in that cap and dirty blouse."

"I'll go as I am, or not at all," said the other, rising. "I am Sebastian Greppi, a young sculptor. At least," added he, bitterly, "I have about the same right to that name that I have to any other." He turned abruptly away as he spoke, and gained the open air. There for a few moments he stood seemingly irresolute, and then wiping away a heavy tear that had fallen on his cheek, he slowly descended the steps towards the bridge.

When he reached the inn, the strangers had just dined, but left word that when he called he should be introduced at once, and Massy followed the waiter into a small garden, where, in a species of summer-house, they were seated at their wine. One of them

arose courteously as the youth came forward, and placing a chair for him, and filling out a glass of wine, invited him to join them.

"Give him one of your cigars, Baynton," said the other; "they are better than mine." And Massy accepted, and began smoking without a word.

"That fellow at the police-office gave you no further trouble, I hope," said my lord, in a half-languid tone, and with that amount of difficulty that showed he was no master of Italian.

"No," replied Massy, "for the present, he has done nothing more. I'm not so certain, however, that to-morrow or next day I shall not be ordered away from this."

"On what grounds?"

"Suspicion—Heavens knows of what!"

"That's infamous, I say. Eh, Baynton?"

"Detestable," muttered the other.

"And where to can you go!"

"I scarcely know as yet, since the police are in communication throughout the whole Peninsula, and they transmit your character from state to state."

"They'd not credit this in England, Baynton!"

"No, not a word of it!" rejoined the other.

"You're a Neapolitan, I think I heard him say."

"So my passport states."

"Ah, he won't say that he is one though," interposed his lordship in English. "Do you mind that, Baynton?"

"Yes, I remarked it," was the reply.

"And how came you here originally?" asked Selby, turning towards the youth.

"I came here to study and to work. There is always enough to be had to do in this place, copying the works of great masters; and at one's spare moments there is time to try something of one's own."

"And have you done anything of that kind?"

"Yes, I have begun. I have attempted two or three."

"We should like to see them, eh, Baynton?"

"Of course, when we've finished our wine. It's not far off, is it?"

"A few minutes' walk; but not worth even that, when the place is full of things really worth seeing. There's 'Danneker's

Bathing Nymph,' and 'Canova's Dead Cupid,' and 'Rauch's Antigone,' all within reach."

"Mind that, Baynton, we must see all these to-morrow. Could you come about with us, and show us what we ought to see?"

"Who knows if I shall not be on the road to-morrow?" said the youth, smiling faintly.

"Oh, I think not—if there's really nothing against you—if it's only mere suspicion."

"Just so!" said the other, and drank off his wine.

"And are you able to make a good thing of it here—by copying, I mean?" asked his lordship, languidly.

"I can live," said the youth; "and as I labour very little and idle a great deal, that is saying enough, perhaps."

"I'm not sure the police are not right about him, after all, Baynton," said his lordship; "he doesn't seem to care much about his trade;" and Massy was unable to repress a smile at the remark.

"You don't understand English, do you?"

asked Selby, with a degree of eagerness very unusual to him.

"Yes, I am English by birth," was the answer.

"English! and how came you to call yourself a Neapolitan; what was the object of that?"

"I wished to excite less notice and less observation here, and, if possible, to escape the jealousy with which Englishmen are regarded by the authorities; for this I obtained a passport at Naples."

Baynton eyed him suspiciously as he spoke, and as he sipped his wine continued to regard him with a keen glance.

"And how did you manage to get a Neapolitan passport?"

"Our minister, Sir Horace Upton, managed that for me."

"Oh! you are known to Sir Horace, then?"

"Yes."

A quick interchange of looks between my lord and his friend showed that they were by no means satisfied that the young sculptor was simply a worker in marble, and a fashioner in modelling-clay.

"Have you heard from Sir Horace lately?" asked Lord Selby.

"I received this letter to-day, but I have not read it;" and he showed the unopened letter as he spoke.

"The police may, then, have some reasonable suspicions about your residence here," said his lordship, slowly.

"My lord," said Massy, rising, "I have had enough of this kind of examination from the Podesta himself this morning, not to care to pass my evening in a repetition of it. Who I am, what I am, and with what object here, are scarcely matters in which you have any interest, and assuredly were not the subjects on which I expected you should address me. I beg now to take my leave." He moved towards the garden as he spoke, bowing respectfully to each.

"Wait a moment; pray don't go—sit down again—I never meant—of course I couldn't mean so—eh, Baynton?" said his lordship, stammering in great confusion.

"Of course not," broke in Baynton; "his lordship's inquiries were really prompted by a sincere desire to serve you."

"Just so—a sincere desire to serve you."

"In fact, seeing you, as I may say, in the toils."

"Exactly so—in the toils."

"He thought very naturally that his influence and his position might—you understand—for these fellows know perfectly what an English peer is—they take a proper estimate of the power of Great Britain."

His lordship nodded assentingly, as though any stronger corroboration might not be exactly graceful on his part, and Baynton went on:

"Now you perfectly comprehend why—you see at once the whole thing; and I'm sure, instead of feeling any soreness or irritation at my lord's interference, that in point of fact——"

"Just so," broke in his lordship, pressing Massy into a seat at his side—"just so, that's it!"

It requires no ordinary tact for any man to reseat himself at a table from which he has risen in anger or irritation, and Massy had far too little knowledge of life to overcome this difficulty gracefully. He tried indeed to seem at ease—he endeavoured even

to be cheerful, but the efforts were all unsuccessful. My lord was no very acute observer at any time; he was, besides, so constitutionally indolent, that the company which exacted least was ever the most palatable to him. As for Baynton, he was only too happy whenever least reference was made to his opinion, and so they sat and sipped their wine with wonderfully little converse between them.

"You have a statue, or a group, or something or other—haven't you?" said my lord, after a very long interval.

"I have a half-finished model," said the youth, not without a certain irritation at the indifference of his questioner.

"Scarcely light enough to look at it to-night—eh, Baynton?"

"Scarcely!" was the dry answer.

"We can go in the morning though—eh?"

The other nodded a cool assent.

My lord now filled his glass, drank it off, and refilled, with the air of a man nerving himself for a great undertaking—and such was indeed the case. He was about to de-

liver himself of a sentiment, and the occasion was one to which Baynton could not lend his assistance.

"I have been thinking," said he, "that if that same estate we spoke of, Baynton—that Welsh property, you know—and that thing in Ireland, should fall in—I'd buy some statues and have a gallery!"

"Devilish costly work you'd find it," muttered Baynton.

"Well, I suppose it is—not more so than a racing stable after all."

"Perhaps not."

"Besides, I look upon that property—if it does ever come to me—as a kind of windfall; it was one of those pieces of fortune one couldn't have expected, you know." Then turning towards the youth, as if to apologise for a discussion in which he could take no part, he said, "We were talking of a property which, by the eccentricity of its owner, may one day become mine."

"And which doubtless some other had calculated on inheriting," said the youth.

"Well, that may be very true—I never thought about that—eh, Baynton?"

"Why should you?" was the short response.

"Gain and loss, loss and gain," muttered the youth, moodily, "are the laws of life."

"I say, Baynton, what a jolly moonlight there is out there in the garden. Wouldn't it be a capital time this to see your model, eh?"

"If you are disposed to take the trouble," said the youth, rising, and blushing modestly; and the others stood up at the same moment.

Nothing passed between them as they followed the young sculptor through many an intricate by-way and narrow lane; and at last reached the little stream on whose bank stood his studio.

"What have we here!" exclaimed Baynton, as he saw it; "is this a little temple?"

"It is my workshop," said the boy, proudly, and produced the key to open the door.

Scarcely had he crossed the threshold, however, than his foot struck a roll of papers, and stooping down he caught up a large placard, headed, "Morte al Tiranno,"

in large capitals. Holding the sheet up to the moonlight, he saw that it contained a violent and sanguinary appeal to the wildest passions of the Carbonari—one of those savage exhortations to blood-shedding, which were taken from the terrible annals of the French revolution. Some of these bore the picture of a guillotine at top, others were headed with crossed poniards.

"What are all these about?" asked Baynton, as he took up three or four of them in his hand; but the youth, overcome with terror, could make no answer.

"These are all sans-culotte literature, I take it," said his lordship; but the youth was stupified and silent.

"Has there been any treachery at work here?" asked Baynton. "Is there a scheme to entrap you?"

The youth nodded a melancholy and slow assent.

"But why should you be obnoxious to these people? Have you any enemies amongst them?"

"I cannot tell," gloomily muttered the youth.

"And this is your statue?" said Baynton, as opening a large shutter he suffered a flood of moonlight to fall on the figure.

"Fine!—a work of great merit, Baynton," broke in his lordship, whose apathy was at last overcome by admiration. But the youth stood regardless of their comments, his eyes bent upon the ground, nor did he heed them as they moved from side to side, examining the statue in all its details, and in words of high praise speaking their approval.

"I'll buy this," muttered his lordship. "I'll give him an order, too, for another work —leaving the subject to himself."

"A clever fellow, certainly," replied the other.

"Whom does he mean the figure to represent?"

"It is Alcibiades as he meets his death," broke in the youth—"he is summoned to the door as though to welcome a friend, and he falls pierced by a poisoned arrow—there is but legend to warrant the fact. I cared little for the incident—I was full of the man, as he contended with seven chariots in the

Olympic games, and proudly rode round the course with his glittering shield of ivory and gold, and his waving locks all perfumed. I thought of him in his gorgeous panoply, and his voluptuousness; lion-hearted, and danger-seeking, pampering the very flesh he offered to the spears of the enemy. I pictured him to my mind, embellishing life with every charm, and daring death in every shape. Beautiful as Apollo—graceful as the bounding Mercury—bold as Achilles, the lion's whelp, as Æschylus calls him. This," added he, in a tone of depression—"this is but a sorry version of what my mind had conceived."

"I arrest you, Sebastiano Greppi," said a voice from behind; and suddenly three gendarmes surrounded the youth, who stood still and speechless with terror, while a mean-looking man in shabby black gathered up the printed proclamations that lay about, and commenced a search for others throughout the studio.

"Ask them will they take our bail for his appearance, Baynton," said my lord, eagerly.

"No use—they'd only laugh at us," was the reply.

"Can we be of any service to you? Is there anything we can do?" asked his lordship of the boy.

"You must not communicate with the prisoner, signore," cried the brigadier, "if you don't wish to share his arrest."

"And this, doubtless," said the man in black, standing, and holding up the lantern to view the statue—"this is the figure of Liberty we have heard of, pierced by the deadly arrow of tyranny!"

"You hear them!" cried the boy in wild indignation, addressing the Englishmen; "you hear how these wretches draw their infamous allegations; but this shall not serve them as a witness." And with a spring he seized a large wooden mallet from the floor and dashed the model in pieces.

A cry of horror and rage burst from the bystanders, and as the Englishmen stooped in sorrow over the broken statue, the gendarmes secured the boy's wrist with a stout cord, and led him away.

"Go after them, Baynton; tell them he is an Englishman, and that if he comes to harm they'll hear of it!" cried my lord, eagerly, while he muttered in a lower tone,

"I think we might knock these fellows over and liberate him at once—eh, Baynton?"

"No use if we did," replied the other; "they'd overpower us afterwards. Come along to the inn; we'll see about it in the morning."

CHAPTER IX.

A COUNCIL OF STATE.

It was a fine mellow evening of the late autumn, as two men sat in a large and handsomely-furnished chamber, opening upon a vast garden. There was something in the dim half-light, the heavily perfumed air, rich with the odour of the orange and the lime, and the stillness, that imparted a sense of solemnity to the scene, where, indeed, few words were interchanged, and each seemed to ponder long after every syllable of the other.

We have no mysteries with our reader, and we hasten to say that one of these personages was the Chevalier Stubber—confidential minister of the Duke of Massa; the other was our old acquaintance, Billy Traynor. If there was some faint resemblance

in the fortunes of these two men, who, sprung from the humblest walks of life, had elevated themselves by their talents to a more exalted station, there all likeness between them ended. Each represented, in some of the very strongest characteristics, a nationality totally unlike that of the other. The Saxon, blunt, imperious, and decided; the Celt, subtle, quick-sighted, and suspicious, distrustful of all save his own skill in a moment of difficulty.

"But you have not told me his real name yet," said the Chevalier, as he slowly smoked his cigar, and spoke with the half-listlessness of a careless inquirer.

"I know that, sir," said Billy, cautiously. "I don't see any need of it."

"Nor your own, either," remarked the other.

"Nor even that, sir," responded Billy, calmly.

"It comes to this, then, my good friend," rejoined Stubber, "that having got yourself into trouble, and having discovered, by the aid of a countryman, that a little frankness would serve you greatly, you prefer to preserve a mystery that I could easily pene-

trate if I cared for it, to speaking openly and freely, as a man might with one of his own."

"We have no mysteries, sir. We have family secrets, that don't regard any one but ourselves. My young ward, or pupil, whichever I ought to call him, has, maybe, his own reasons for leading a life of unobtrusive obscurity, and what one may term an umbrageous existence. It's enough for me to know that, to respect it."

"Come, come; all this is very well if you were at liberty, or if you stood on the soil of your own country; but remember where you are now, and what accusations are hanging over you. I have here beside me very grave charges indeed—constant and familiar intercourse with leaders of the Carbonari——"

"We don't know one of them," broke in Billy.

"Correspondence with others beyond the frontier," continued the Chevalier——

"Nor that either," interrupted Billy.

"Treasonable placards found by the police in the very hands of the accused—insolent conduct to the authorities when arrested—

attempted escape: all these duly certified on oath."

"Devil may care for that—oaths are as plenty with these blaguards as clasp-knives, and for the same purpose, too. Here's what it is, now," said he, crossing his arms on the table, and staring steadfastly at the other: "we came here to study and work, to perfect ourselves in the art of modelin' with good studies around us; and more than all, a quiet, secluded little spot, with nothing to distract our attention, or take us out of a mind for daily labour. That we made a mistake, is clear enough. Like everywhere else in this fine country, there's nothing but tyrants on one side, and assassins on the other; and meek and humble as we lived, we couldn't escape the thievin' blaguards of spies——"

"Do you know the handwriting of this address?" said the Chevalier, showing a sealed letter, directed to Sebastiano Greppi, Sculptore, Carrara.

"Maybe I do—maybe I don't," was the gruff reply. "Won't you let me finish what I was sayin'?"

"This letter was found in the possession

of the young prisoner, and is of some consequence," continued the other, totally inattentive to the question.

"I suppose a letter is always of consequence to him it's meant for," was the half-sulky reply. "Sure you're not goin' to break the seal:—sure you don't mean to read it!" exclaimed he, almost springing from his seat as he spoke.

"I don't think I'd ask your permission for anything I think fit to do, my worthy fellow," said the other, sternly; and then passing across the room, he summoned a gendarme, who waited at the door, to enter.

"Take this man back to the Fortezza," said he, calmly; and while Billy Traynor slowly followed the guard, the other seated himself leisurely at the table, lighted his candles, and perused the letter. Whether disappointed by the contents, or puzzled by the meaning, he sat long pondering with the document before him.

It was late in the night when a messenger came to say that his Highness desired to see him; and Stubber arose at once, and hastened to the Duke's chamber.

In a room studiously plain and simple in

all its furniture, and on a low, uncurtained bed, lay the Prince, half dressed, a variety of books and papers littering the table, and even the floor at his side. Maps, prints, coloured drawings—some representing views of Swiss scenery, others being portraits of opera celebrities—were mingled with illuminated missals and richly-embossed rosaries; while police reports, petitions, rose-coloured billets and bon-bons, made up a mass of confusion wonderfully typical of the illustrious individual himself.

Stubber had scarcely crossed the threshold of the room when he appeared to appreciate the exact frame of his master's mind. It was the very essence of his tact to catch in a moment the ruling impulse which swayed for a time that strange and vacillating nature, and he had but to glance at him to divine what was passing within.

"So then," broke out the Prince, "here we are actually in the very midst of revolution. Marocchi has been stabbed in the Piazza of Carrara. Is it a thing to laugh at, sir?——"

"The wound has only been fatal to the breast of his surtout, your Highness; and so

adroitly given, besides, that it does not correspond with the incision in his waistcoat."

"You distrust every one and every thing, Stubber; and, of course, you attribute all that is going forward to the police."

"Of course I do, your Highness. They predict events with too much accuracy not to have a hand in their fulfilment. I knew three weeks ago when this outbreak was to occur, who was to be assassinated—since that is the phrase for Marocchi's mock wound—who was to be arrested, and the exact nature of the demand the Council would make of your Royal Highness to suppress the troubles."

"And what was that?" asked the Duke, grasping a paper in his hand as he spoke.

"An Austrian division, with a half-battery of field-artillery, a judge-advocate to try the prisoners, and a provost-marshal to shoot them."

"And you'd have me believe that all these disturbances are deliberate plots of a party who desire Austrian influence in the duchy?" cried the Duke, eagerly. "There may be really something in what you suspect. Here's a letter I have just received from La

Sabloukoff: she's always keen-sighted; and *she* thinks that the Court at Vienna is playing out here the game that they have not courage to attempt in Lombardy. What if this Wahnsdorf was a secret agent in the scheme—eh, Stubber?"

Stubber started with well-affected astonishment, and appeared as if astounded at the keen acuteness of the Duke's suggestion.

"Eh," cried his Highness, in evident delight. "That never occurred to *you*, Stubber. I'd wager there's not a man in the duchy could have hit that plot but myself."

Stubber nodded sententiously, without a word.

"I never liked that fellow," resumed the Duke. "I always had my suspicion about that half-reckless, wasteful manner he had. I know that I was alone in this opinion—eh, Stubber? It never struck *you?*"

"Never! your Highness, never!" replied Stubber, frankly.

"I can't show you the Sabloukoff's letter, Stubber: there are certain private details for my own eye alone; but she speaks of a young sculptor at Carrara, a certain——let me find his name. Ah! here it is, Sebastian

Greppi, a young artist of promise, for whom she bespeaks our protection. Can you make him out, and let us see him?"

Stubber bowed in silence.

"I will give him an order for something. There's a pedestal in the flower-garden where the Psyche stood. You remember, I smashed the Psyche, because it reminded me of Camilla Monti. He shall design a figure for that place. I'd like a youthful Bacchus. I have a clever sketch of one somewhere; and it shall be tinted — slightly tinted. The Greeks always coloured their statues. Strange enough, too; for, do you remark, Stubber, they never represented the iris of the eye, which the Romans invariably did; and yet, if you observe closely, you'll see that the eyelid implies the direction of the eye more accurately than in the Roman heads. I'm certain you never detected what I'm speaking of—eh, Stubber?"

Stubber candidly confessed that he had not; and listened patiently while his master descanted critically on the different styles of art, and his own especial tact and skill in discriminating between them.

"You'll look after these police returns,

then, Stubber," said he, at last. "You'll let these people understand that we can suffice for the administration of our own duchy. We neither want advice from Metternich, nor battalions from Radetzky. The laws here are open to every man; and if we have any claim to the gratitude of our people, it rests on our character for justice."

While he spoke with a degree of earnestness that indicated sincerity, there was something in the expression of his eye—a half-malicious drollery in its twinkle—that made it exceedingly difficult to say whether his words were uttered in honesty of purpose, or in mere mockery and derision. Whether Stubber rightly understood their import is more than we are able to say; but it is very probable that he was, with all his shrewdness, mystified by one whose nature was a puzzle to himself.

"Let Marocchi return to Carrara. Say we have taken the matter into our own hands. Change the brigadier in command of the gendarmerie there. Tell the canonico Baldetti that we look to *him* and his deacons for true reports of any movement that is plotting in the town. I take no steps with

regard to Wahnsdorf for the present; but let him be closely watched. And then, Stubber, send off an estafetta to Pietra Santa for the ortolans, for I think we have earned our breakfast by all this attention to state affairs." And then, with a laugh whose accents gave not the very faintest clue to its meaning, he lay back on his pillow again.

"And these two prisoners, your Highness; what is to be done with them?"

"Whatever you please, Stubber. Give them the third-class cross of Massa, or a month's imprisonment, at your own good pleasure. Only no more business—no papers to sign—no schemes to unravel; and so good night." And the Chevalier retired at once from a presence which he well knew resented no injury so unmercifully as any invasion of his personal comfort.

CHAPTER X.

THE LIFE THEY LED AT MASSA.

It was with no small astonishment young Massy heard that he and his faithful follower were not alone restored to liberty, but that an order of his Highness had assigned them a residence in a portion of the palace, and a promise of future employment.

"This smacks of Turkish rather than of European rule," said the youth. "In prison yesterday—in a palace to-day. My own fortunes are wayward enough, Heaven knows, not to require any additional ingredient of uncertainty. What think you, Traynor?"

"I'm thinkin'," said Billy, gravely, "that as the bastes of the field are guided by their instincts to objects that suit their natures, so man ought, by his reason, to be able to pilot himself in difficulties—choosin' this, avoidin'

that—seein' by the eye of prophecy where a road would lead him, and makin' of what seem the accidents of life, steppin'-stones to fortune."

"In what way does your theory apply here?" cried the other. "How am I to guess whither this current may carry me?"

"At all events, there's no use wastin' your strength by swimmin' against it," rejoined Billy.

"To be the slave of some despot's whim—the tool of a caprice that may elevate me to-day, and to-morrow sentence me to the gallows. The object I have set before myself in life is to be independent. Is this, then, the road to it?"

"You're tryin' to be what no man ever was, or will be, to the world's end, then," said Billy. "Sure it's the very nature and essence of our life here below, that we are dependent one on the other for kindness, for affection, for material help in time of difficulty, for counsel in time of doubt. The rich man and the poor one have their mutual dependencies; and if it wasn't so, cowld-hearted and selfish as the world is, it would be five hundred times worse."

"You mistake my meaning," said Massy, sternly, "as you often do, to read me a lesson on a text of your own. When I spoke of independence, I meant freedom from the serfdom of another's charity. I would that my life here, at least, should be of my own procuring."

"*I* get mine from *you*," said Traynor, calmly, "and never felt myself a slave on that account."

"Forgive me, my dear, kind friend. I could hate myself if I gave you a moment's pain. This temper of mine does not improve by time."

"There's one way to conquer it. Don't be broodin' on what's within. Don't be magnifyin' your evil fortunes to your own heart, till you come to think the world all little and yourself all great. Go out to your daily labour, whatever it be, with a stout spirit to do your best, and a thankful, grateful heart, that you are able to do it. Never let it out of your mind, that if there's many a one your inferior, winnin' his way up to fame and fortune before you, there's just as many better than you toilin' away unseen and

unnoticed, wearin' out genius in a garret, and carryin' off a God-like intellect to an obscure grave!"

"You talk to me as though my crying sin were an overweening vanity," said the youth, half angrily.

"Well, it's one of them," said Billy; and the blunt frankness of the avowal threw the boy into a fit of laughing.

"You certainly do not intend to spoil me, Billy," said he, still laughing.

"Why would I do what so many is ready to do for nothing? What does the crowd that praise the work of a young man of genius care where they're leadin' him to? It's like people callin' out to a strong swimmer, 'Go out farther and farther—out to the open say, where the waves is rollin' big, and the billows is roughest, that's worthy of you, in your strong might and your stout limbs. Lave the still water and the shallows to the weak and the puny. *Your* course is on the mountain wave, over the bottomless ocean.' It's little they think if he's ever to get back again. 'Tis their boast and their pride that they said, 'Go on;' and when his

cold corpse comes washed to shore, all they have is a word of derision and scorn for one who ventured beyond his powers."

"How you cool down one's ardour—with what pleasure you check every impulse that nerves one's heart for high daring!" said the youth, bitterly. "These eternal warnings—these never-ending forebodings of failure—are sorry stimulants to energy."

"Isn't it better for you to have all your reverses at the hands of a crayture as humble as me?" said Billy, while the tears glistened in his eyes. "What good am I, except for this?"

In a moment the boy's arms were around him, while he cried out,

"There, forgive me once more, and let me try if I cannot amend a temper that any but yourself had grown weary of correcting. I'll work—I'll labour—I'll submit—I'll accept the daily rubs of life, as others take them, and you shall be satisfied with me. We shall go back to all our old pursuits, my dear Billy. I'll join all your ecstasies over Æschylus, and believe as much as I can of Herodotus, to please you. You shall lead me to all the wonders of the stars, and

dazzle me with the brightness of visions that my intellect is lost in; and in revenge I only ask that you should sit with me in the studio, and read to me some of those songs of Horace, that move the heart like old wine. Shall I own to you what it is which sways me thus uncertainly—jarring every chord of my existence, making my life a sea of stormy conflict? Shall I tell you?"

He grasped the other's hand with both his own as he spoke, and, while his lips quivered in strong emotion, went on:

"It is this, then. I cannot forget, do all that I will, I cannot root out of my heart what I once believed myself to be. You know what I mean. Well, there it is still, like the sense of a wrong or foul injustice, as though I had been robbed and cheated of what never was mine! This contrast between the life my earliest hopes had pictured, and that which I am destined to, never leaves me. All your teachings—and I have seen how devotedly you have addressed yourself to this lesson—have not eradicated from my nature the proud instincts that guided my childhood. Often and often have you warmed my blood by

thoughts of a triumph to be achieved by me hereafter—how men should recognise me as a genius, and elevate me to honours and rewards; and yet would I barter such success, ten thousand times told, for an hour of that high station that comes by birth alone, independent of all effort—the heirloom of deeds chronicled centuries back, whose actors have been dust for ages. That is real pride," cried he, enthusiastically, "and has no alloy of the petty vanity that mingles with the sense of a personal triumph."

Traynor hung his head heavily as the youth spoke, and a gloomy melancholy settled on his features: the sad conviction came home to him of all his counsels being fruitless—all his teachings in vain; and as the boy sat wrapt in a wild, dreamy reverie of ancestral greatness, the humble peasant brooded darkly over the troubles such a temperament might evoke.

"It is agreed, then," cried Massy, suddenly, "that we are to accept of this great man's bounty, live under his roof, and eat his bread. Well, I accede—as well his as another's. Have you seen the home they destine for us?"

"Yes; it's a real paradise, and in a garden that would beat Adam's, now," exclaimed Traynor; "for there's marble fountains, and statues, and temples, and grottos in it; and it's as big as a prairie, and as wild as a wilderness. And, better than all, there's a little pathway leads to a private stair that goes up into the library of the palace—a spot nobody ever enters, and where you may study the whole day long without hearin' a footstep. All the books is there that ever was written, and manuscripts without end besides; and the minister says I'm to have my own kay, and go in and out whenever I plaze; 'And if there's anything wantin',' says he, 'just order it on a slip of paper and send it to me, and you'll have it at once.' When I asked if I ought to spake to the librarian himself, he only laughed, and said, 'That's me; but I'm never there. Take my word for it, Doctor, you'll have the place to yourself.'"

He spoke truly. Billy Traynor had it, indeed, to himself. There, the grey dawn of morning, and the last shadows of evening, ever found him, seated in one of those deep, cell-like recesses of the windows; the table,

the seats, the very floor littered with volumes which, revelling in the luxury of wealth, he had accumulated around him. His greedy avidity for knowledge knew no bounds. The miser's thirst for gold was weak in comparison with that intense craving that seized upon him. Historians, critics, satirists, poets, dramatists, metaphysicians, never came amiss to a mind bent on acquiring. The life he led was like the realisation of a glorious dream—the calm repose, the perfect stillness of the spot, the boundless stores that lay about him; the growing sense of power, as day by day his intellect expanded; new vistas opened themselves before him, and new and unproved sources of pleasure sprang up in his nature. The never-ending variety gave a zest, too, to his labours, that averted all weariness; and at last he divided his time ingeniously, alternating grave and difficult subjects with lighter topics —making, as he said himself, "Aristophanes digest Plato."

And what of young Massy all this while? His life was a dream, too, but of another and very different kind. Visions of a glorious future alternated with sad and de-

pressing thoughts; high darings, and hopeless views of what lay before him, came and went, and went and came again. The Duke, who had just taken his departure for some watering-place in Germany, gave him an order for certain statues, the models for which were to be ready by his return—at least, in that sketchy state of which clay is even more susceptible than canvas. The young artist chafed and fretted under the restraint of an assigned task. It was gall to his haughty nature to be told that his genius should accept dictation, and his fancy be fettered by the suggestions of another. If he tried to combat this rebellious spirit, and addressed himself steadily to labour, he found that his imagination grew sluggish, and his mind uncreative. The sense of servitude oppressed him; and though he essayed to subdue himself to the condition of an humble artist, the old pride still rankled in his heart, and spirited him to a haughty resistance. His days thus passed over in vain attempts to work, or still more unprofitable lethargy. He lounged through the deserted garden, or lay, half-dreamily, in the long, deep grass, listening to the cicala,

or watching the emerald-backed lizards as they lay basking in the sun. He drank in all the soft, voluptuous influences of a climate which steeps the senses in a luxurious stupor, making the commonest existence a toil, but giving to mere indolence all the zest of a rich enjoyment. Sometimes he wandered into the library, and noiselessly drew nigh the spot where Billy sat deeply busied in his books. He would gaze silently, half curiously, at the poor fellow, and then steal noiselessly away, pondering on the blessings of that poor peasant's nature, and wondering what in his own organisation had denied him the calm happiness of this humble man's life.

CHAPTER XI.

AT MASSA.

BILLY TRAYNOR sat, deeply sunk in study, in the old recess of the palace library. A passage in the Antigone had puzzled him, and the table was littered with critics and commentators, while manuscript notes, scrawled in the most rude hand, lay on every side. He did not perceive, in his intense preoccupation, that Massy had entered and taken the place directly in front of him. There the youth sat gazing steadfastly at the patient and studious features before him. It was only when Traynor, mastering the difficulty that had so long opposed him, broke out into an enthusiastic declamation of the text, that Massy, unable to control the impulse, laughed aloud.

"How long are you there? I never

noticed you comin' in," said Billy, half-shamed at his detected ardour.

"But a short time—I was wondering at—ay, Billy, and was envying, too—the concentrated power in which you address yourself to your task. It is the real secret of all success, and somehow it is a frame of mind I cannot achieve."

"How is the boy Bacchus goin' on?" asked Billy, eagerly.

"I broke him up yesterday, and it is like a weight off my heart that his curly bullet-head and sensual lips are not waiting for me as I enter the studio."

"And the Cleopatra?" asked Traynor, still more anxiously.

"Smashed—destroyed. Shall I own to you, Billy, I see at last myself what you have so often hinted to me—I have no genius for the work."

"I never said—I never thought so," cried the other; "I only insisted that nothing was to be done without labour—hard, unflinching labour—that easy successes were poor triumphs, and bore no results."

"There—there—I'll hear that sermon no more. I'd not barter the freedom of my own

unfettered thoughts, as they come and go, in hours of listless idleness, for all the success you ever promised me. There are men toil elevates—me, it wearies to depression, and brings no compensation in the shape of increased power. Mine is an unrewarding clay—that's the whole of it. Cultivation only develops the rank weeds which are deep sown in the soil. I'd like to travel—to visit some new land—some scene where all association with the past shall be broken. What say you?"

"I'm ready, and at your orders," said Traynor, closing his book.

"East or west, then, which shall it be? If sometimes my heart yearns for the glorious scenes of Palestine, full of memories that alone satisfy the soul's longings, there are days when I pant for the solitude of the vast savannahs of the New World. I feel as if to know oneself thoroughly one's nature should be tested by the perils and exigencies of a life hourly making some demand on courage and ingenuity. The hunter's life does this. What say you—shall we try it?"

"I'm ready," was the calm reply.

"We have means for such an enterprise—

have we not? You told me, some short time past, that nearly the whole of our last year's allowance was untouched."

"Yes, it's all there to the good," said Billy; "a good round sum too."

"Let us get rid of all needless equipment, then," cried Massy, "and only retain what beseems a prairie life. Sell everything, or give it away at once."

"Leave all that to me—I'll manage everything—only say when you make up your mind."

"But it is made up. I have resolved on the step. Few can decide so readily—for I leave neither home nor country behind."

"Don't say that," burst in Billy; "here's myself, the poorest crayture that walks the earth, that never knew where he was born or who nursed him, yet even to me there's the tie of a native land—there's the soil that reared warriors and poets and orators, that I heard of when a child, and gloried in as a man; and better than that, there's the green meadows and the leafy valleys where kind-hearted men and women live and labour, spakin' our own tongue and feelin' our own feelins, and that, if we saw to-morrow, we'd

know were our own—heart and hand our own. The smell of the yellow furze, under a griddle of oaten bread, would be sweeter to me than all the gales of Araby the Blest, for it would remind me of the hearth I had my share of, and the roof that covered me, when I was alone in the world."

The boy buried his face in his hands and made no answer. At last, raising up his head, he said,

"Let us try this life; let us see if action be not better than mere thought. The efforts of intellect seem to inspire a thirst there is no slaking. Sleep brings no rest after them. I long for the sense of some strong peril which, over, gives the proud feeling of a goal reached—a feat accomplished."

"I'll go wherever you like—I'll be whatever you want me," said Billy, affectionately.

"Let us lose no time, then. I would not that my present ardour should cool ere we have begun our plan. What day is this? The seventh. Well, on the eighteenth there is a ship sails from Genoa for Porta Rica. It was the announcement set my heart a-thinking of the project. I dreamed of it two entire nights. I fancied myself walking the

deck on a starlit night, and framing all my projects for the future. The first thing I saw the next morning was the same large placard, 'The Colombo will sail for Porta Rica on Friday the eighteenth.'"

"An unlucky day," muttered Billy, interrupting.

"I have fallen upon few that were otherwise," said Massy, gloomily; "besides," he added, after a pause, "I have no faith in omens, or any care for superstitions. Come, let us set about our preparations. Do *you* bethink you how to rid ourselves of all useless incumbrances here. Be it *my* care to jot down the list of all we shall need for the voyage and the life to follow it. Let us see which displays most zeal for the new enterprise."

Billy Traynor addressed himself with a will to the duty allotted him. He rummaged through drawers and desks, destroyed papers and letters, laid aside all the articles which he judged suitable for preservation, and then hastened off to the studio to arrange for the disposal of the few "studies," for they were scarcely more, which remained of Massy's labours.

A nearly finished Faun, the head of a

Niobe, the arm and hand of a Jove launching a thunderbolt, the torso of a dead sailor after shipwreck, lay amid fragments of shattered figures, grotesque images, some caricatures of his own works, and crude models of anatomy. The walls were scrawled with charcoal drawings of groups—one day to be fashioned in sculpture—with verses from Dante, or lines from Tasso, inscribed beneath; proud resolves to a life of labour figured beside stanzas in praise of indolence and dreamy abandonment. There were passages of Scripture, too, glorious bursts of the poetic rapture of the Psalms, intermingled with quaint remarks on life from Jean Paul or Herder. All that a discordant, incoherent nature consisted of was there in some shape or other depicted; and as Billy ran his eye over this curious journal—for such it was—he grieved over the spirit which had dictated it.

The whole object of all his teaching had been to give a purpose to this uncertain and wavering nature, and yet everything showed him now that he had failed. The blight which had destroyed the boy's early fortunes still worked its evil influences, poisoning

every healthful effort, and dashing, with a sense of shame, every successful step towards fame and honour.

"Maybe he's right after all," muttered Billy to himself. "The New World is the only place for those who have not the roots of an ancient stock to hold them in the old. Men can be there whatever is in them, and they can be judged without the prejudices of a class."

Having summed up, as it were, his own doubts in this remark, he proceeded with his task. While he was thus occupied, Massy entered and threw himself into a chair.

"There, you may give it up, Traynor. Fate is ever against us, do and decide on what we will. Your confounded omen of a Friday was right this time."

"What do you mean? Have you altered your mind?"

"I expected you to say so," said the other, bitterly. "I knew that I should meet with this mockery of my resolution, but it is uncalled for. It is not *I* that have changed!"

"What is it, then, has happened—do they refuse your passport?"

"Not that either; I never got so far as to

ask for it. The misfortune is in this wise: on going to the bank to learn the sum that lay to my credit and draw for it, I was met by the reply, that I had nothing there—not a shilling. Before I could demand how this could be the case, the whole truth suddenly flashed across my memory, and I recalled to mind how one night, as I lay awake, the thought occurred to me, that it was base and dishonourable in me, now that I was come to manhood, to accept of the means of life from one who felt shame in my connexion with him. 'Why,' thought I, 'is there to be the bond of dependence where there is no tie of affection to soften its severity?' And so I arose from my bed, and wrote to Sir Horace, saying, that by the same post I should remit to his banker at Naples whatever remained of my last year's allowance, and declined in future to accept of any further assistance. This I did the same day, and never told you of it—partly, lest you should try to oppose me in my resolve; partly," and here his voice faltered, "to spare myself the pain of revealing my motives. And now that I have buoyed my heart up with this project, I find myself without means to attempt it. Not

that I regret my act or would recal it," cried he, proudly, "but that the sudden disappointment is hard to bear. I was feeding my hopes with such projects for the future when this stunning news met me, and the thought that I am now chained here by necessity has become a torture."

"What answer did Sir Horace give to your letter?" asked Billy.

"I forget; I believe he never replied to it, or if he did, I have no memory of what he said. Stay—there was a letter of his taken from me when I was arrested at Carrara. The seal was unbroken at the time."

"I remember the letter was given to the Minister, who has it still in his keeping."

"What care I," cried Massy, angrily, "in whose hands it may be?"

"The Minister is not here now," said Billy, half speaking to himself; "he is travelling with the Duke, but when he comes back——"

"When he comes back!" burst in Massy, impatiently; "with what calm philosophy you look forward to a remote future. I tell

you that this scheme is now a part and parcel of my very existence. I can turn to no other project, or journey no other road in life, till at least I shall have tried it!"

"Well, it is going to work in a more humble fashion," said Billy, calmly. "Leave me to dispose of all these odds and ends here——"

"This trash!" cried the youth, fiercely. "Who would accept it as a gift?"

"Don't disparage it; there are signs of genius even in these things; but, above all, don't meddle with me, but just leave me free to follow my own way. There now, go back and employ yourself preparing for the road —trust the rest to me."

Massy obeyed without speaking. It was not, indeed, that he ventured to believe in Traynor's resources, but he was indisposed to further discussion, and longed to be in solitude once more.

It was late at night when they met again. Charles Massy was seated at a window of his room, looking out into the starry blue of a cloudless sky, when Traynor sat down beside him. "Well," said he, gently, "it's all done

and finished. I have sold off everything, and if you will only repair the hand of the Faun, which I broke in removing, there's nothing more wanting."

"That much can be done by any one," said Massy, haughtily. "I hope never to set eyes on the trumpery things again."

"But I have promised you would do it," said Traynor, eagerly.

"And how—by what right could you pledge yourself for my labour? Nay," cried he, suddenly changing the tone in which he spoke, "knowing my wilful nature, how could you answer for what I might or might not do?"

"I knew," said Billy, slowly, "that you had a great project in your head, and that to enable you to attempt it, you would scorn to throw all the toil upon another."

"I never said I was ashamed of labour," said the youth, reddening with shame.

"If you had, I would despair of you altogether," rejoined the other.

"Well, what is it that I have to do?" said Massy, bluntly.

"It is to remodel the arm; for I don't

think you can mend it; but you'll see it yourself."

"Where is the figure—in the studio?"

"No; it is in a small pavilion of a villa just outside the gates. It was while I was conveying it there it met this misfortune. There's the name of the villa on that card. You'll find the garden gate open, and by taking the path through the olive wood you'll be there in a few minutes; for I must go over to-morrow to Carrara with the Niobe; the Academy has bought it for a model."

A slight start of surprise and a faint flush bespoke the proud astonishment with which he heard of this triumph; but he never spoke a word.

"If you had any pride in your works, you'd be delighted to see where the Faun is to be placed. It is in a garden, handsomer even than this here, with terraces rising one over the other, and looking out on the blue sea, from the golden strand of Via Reggio down to the headlands above Spezia. The great olive wood in the vast plain lies at

your feet, and the white cliffs of Serravezza behind you."

"What care I for all this," said Massy, gloomily. "Benvenuto could afford to be in love with his own works—*I* cannot!"

Traynor saw at once the mood of mind he was in, and stole noiselessly away to his room.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PAVILION IN THE GARDEN.

CHARLES MASSY, dressed in the blouse of his daily labour, and with the tools of his craft in his hand, set out early in search of the garden indicated by Billy Traynor. A sense of hope that it was for the last time he was to exercise his art, that a new and more stirring existence was now about to open before him, made his step lighter and his spirits higher as he went. "Once amid the deep woods, and on the wide plains of the New World, I shall dream no more of what judgment men may pass upon my efforts. There, if I suffice to myself, I have no other ordeal to meet. Perils may try me, but not the whims and tastes of other men."

Thus, fancying an existence of unbounded

freedom and unfettered action, he speedily traversed the olive wood, and almost ere he knew it found himself within the garden. The gorgeous profusion of beautiful flowers, the graceful grouping of shrubs, the richly perfumed air, laden with a thousand odours, first awoke him from his day-dream, and he stood amazed in the midst of a scene surpassing all that he had ever conceived of loveliness. From the terrace, where under a vine trellis he was standing, he could perceive others above him rising on the mountain side, while some beneath descended towards the sea, which, blue as a turquoise, lay basking and glittering below. A stray white sail or so was to be seen, but there was barely wind to shake the olive leaves, and waft the odours of the orange and the oleander. It was yet too early for the hum of insect life, and the tricklings of the tiny fountains that sprinkled the flower-beds were the only sounds in the stillness. It was in colour, outline, effect, and shadow, a scene such as only Italy can present, and Massy drank in all its influences with an eager delight.

"Were I a rich man," said he, "I would

buy this paradise. What in all the splendour of man's invention can compare with the gorgeous glory of this flowery carpet? What frescoed ceiling could vie with these wide-leaved palms, interlaced with these twining acacias, glimpses of the blue sky breaking through? And for a mirror, there lies Nature's own—the great blue ocean! What a life were it, to linger days and hours here, amid such objects of beauty, having one's thoughts ever upwards, and making in imagination a world of which these should be the types. The faintest fancies that could float across the mind in such an existence would be pleasures more real, more tangible, than ever were felt in the tamer life of the actual world."

Loitering along, he at length came upon the little temple which served as a studio, on entering which, he found his own statue enshrined in the place of honour. Whether it was the frame of mind in which he chanced to be, or that place and light had some share in the result, for the first time the figure struck him as good, and he stood long gazing at his own work with the calm eye of a critic. At length detecting, as he

deemed, some defects in design, he drew nigh, and began to correct them. There are moments in which the mind attains the highest and clearest perception—seasons in which, whatever the nature of the mental operation, the faculties address themselves readily to the task, and labour becomes less a toil than an actual pleasure. This was such. Massy worked on for hours; his conceptions grew rapidly under his hand into bold realities, and he saw that he was succeeding. It was not alone that he had imparted a more graceful and lighter beauty to his statue, but he felt within himself the promptings of a spirit that grew with each new suggestion of its own. Efforts that before had seemed above him he now essayed boldly; difficulties that once had appeared insurmountable he now encountered with courageous daring. Thus striving, he lost all sense of fatigue. Hunger and exhaustion were alike unremembered, and it was already late in the afternoon, as, overcome by continued toil, he threw himself heavily down, and sank off into a deep sleep.

It was nigh sunset as he awoke. The distant bell of a monastery was ringing the hour of evening prayer, the solemn chime of the "Venti quattro," as he leaned on his arm and gazed in astonishment around him. The whole seemed like a dream. On every side were objects new and strange to his eyes. Casts and models he had never seen before; busts and statues and studies, all unknown to him. At last his eyes rested on the Faun, and he remembered at once where he was. The languor of excessive fatigue, however, still oppressed him, and he was about to lie back again in sleep, when, bending gently over him, a young girl, with a low, soft accent, asked if he felt ill, or only tired.

Massy gazed, without speaking, at features regular as the most classic model, and whose paleness almost gave them the calm beauty of the marble. His steady stare slightly coloured her cheek, and made her voice falter a little as she repeated her question.

"I scarcely know," said he, sighing heavily. "I feel as though this were a dream, and I am afraid to awaken from it."

"Let me give you some wine," said she,

bending down to hand him the glass: "you have over-fatigued yourself. The Faun is by your hand—is it not?"

He nodded a slow assent.

"Whence did you derive that knowledge of ancient art?" said she, eagerly; "your figure has the light elasticity of the classic models, and yet nothing strained or exaggerated in attitude. Have you studied at Rome?"

"I could do better now," said the youth, as, rising on his elbow, he strained his eyes to examine her. "I could achieve a real success."

A deep flush covered her face at these words, so palpably alluding to herself, and she tried to repeat her question.

"No," said he, "I cannot say I have ever studied: all that I have done is full of faults; but I feel the spring of better things within me. Tell me, is this *your* home?"

"Yes," said she, smiling faintly. "I live in the villa here with my aunt. She has purchased your statue and wishes you to repair it, and then to engage in some other work for her. Let me assist you to rise; you seem very weak."

"I *am* weak, and weary too," said he, staggering to a seat. "I have over-worked myself, perhaps—I scarcely know. Do not take away your hand."

"And you are, then, the Sebastian Greppi of whom Carrara is so proud?"

"They call me Sebastian Greppi; but I never heard that my name was spoken of with any honour."

"You are unjust to your own fame. We have often heard of you. See, here are two models taken from your works. They have been my studies for many a day. I have often wished to see you, and ask if my attempt were rightly begun. Then here is a hand."

"Let me model yours," said the youth, gazing steadfastly at the beautifully shaped one which rested on the chair beside him.

"Come with me to the villa, and I will present you to my aunt; she will be pleased to know you. There, lean on my arm, for I see you are very weak."

"Why are you so kind—so good to me?" said he, faintly, while a tear rose slowly to his eye.

He arose totteringly, and, taking her

arm, walked slowly along at her side. As they went, she spoke kindly and encouragingly to him, praised what she had seen of his works, and said how frequently she had wished to know him, and enjoy the benefit of his counsels in art. "For I, too," said she, laughing, "would be a sculptor."

The youth stopped to gaze at her with a rapture he could not control. That one of such a station, surrounded by all the appliances of a luxurious existence, could devote herself to the toil and labour of art, implied an amount of devotion and energy that at once elevated her in his esteem. She blushed deeply at his continued stare, and turned at last away.

"Oh, do not feel offended with me," cried he, passionately. "If you but knew how your words have relighted within me the dying-out embers of an almost exhausted ambition—if you but knew how my heart has gained courage and hope—how light and brightness have shone in upon me after hours and days of gloom! It was but yesterday I had resolved to abandon this career for ever. I was bent on a new life, in a new world beyond the seas. These few things that

a faithful companion of mine had charged himself to dispose of, were to supply the means of the journey; and now I think of it no more. I shall remain here to work hard and study, and try to achieve what may one day be called good. You will sometimes deign to see what I am doing, to tell me if my efforts are on the road to success, to give me hope when I am weak-hearted, and courage when I am faint. I know and feel," said he, proudly, "that I am not devoid of what accomplishes success, for I can toil and toil, and throw my whole soul into my work; but for this I need, at least, one who shall watch me with an eye of interest, glorying when I win, sorrowing when I am defeated. Where are we? What palace is this?" cried he, as they crossed a spacious hall, paved with porphyry and Sienna marble.

"This is my home," said the girl, "and this is its mistress."

Just as she spoke, she presented the youth to a lady, who, reclining on a sofa beside a window, gazed out towards the sea. She turned suddenly, and fixed her eyes on the stranger. With a wild start, she sprang up,

and staring eagerly at him, cried, "Who is this? Where does he come from?"

The young girl told his name and what he was; but the words did not fall on listening ears, and the lady sat like one spell-bound, with eyes riveted on the youth's face.

"Am I like any one you have known, Signora," asked he, as he read the effect his presence had produced in her. "Do I recal some other features?"

"You do," said she, reddening painfully.

"And the memory is not of pleasure?" added the youth.

"Far, far from it—it is the saddest and cruellest of all my life," muttered she, half to herself. "What part of Italy are you from? —your accent is southern."

"It is the accent of Naples, Signora," said he, evading her question.

"And your mother—was she Neapolitan?"

"I know little of my birth, Signora. It is a theme I would not be questioned on."

"And you are a sculptor?"

"The artist of the Faun, dearest aunt,"

broke in the girl, who watched with intense anxiety the changing expressions of the youth's features.

"Your voice even more than your features brings up the past," said the lady, as a deadly pallor spread over her own face, and her lips trembled as she spoke. "Will you not tell me something of your history?"

"When you have told me the reason for which you ask it, perhaps I may," said the youth, half sternly.

"There—there!" cried she, wildly, "in every tone, in every gesture, I trace this resemblance. Come nearer to me—let me see your hands."

"They are seamed and hardened with toil, lady," said the youth, as he showed them.

"And yet they look as if there was a time when they did not know labour," said she, eagerly.

An impatient gesture, as if he would not endure a continuance of this questioning, stopped her, and she said, in a faint tone,

"I ask your pardon for all this. My excuse and my apology are, that your

features have recalled a time of sorrow more vividly than any words could. Your voice, too, strengthens the illusion. It may be a mere passing impression: I hope and pray it is. Come, Ida, come with me. Do not leave this, sir, till we speak with you again." So saying, she took her niece's arm and left the room.

CHAPTER XIII.

NIGHT THOUGHTS.

It was with a proud consciousness of having well fulfilled his mission that Billy Traynor once more bent his steps towards Massa. Besides providing himself with books of travel and maps of the regions they were about to visit, he had ransacked Genoa for weapons, and accoutrements, and horse-gear. Well knowing the youth's taste for the costly and the splendid, he had suffered himself to be seduced into the purchase of a gorgeously embroidered saddle-mounting, and a rich bridle, in Mexican taste; a pair of splendidly mounted pistols, chased in gold and studded with large turquoises, with a Damascus sabre, the hilt of which was a miracle of fine workmanship, were also amongst his acquisitions; and poor Billy fed his imagination with the

thought of all the delight these objects were certain to produce. In this way he never wearied admiring them; and a dozen times a day would he unpack them, just to gratify his mind by picturing the enjoyment they were to afford.

"How well you are lookin', my dear boy," cried he, as he burst into the youth's room, and threw his arms around him; "'tis like ten years off my life to see you so fresh and so hearty. Is it the prospect of the glorious time before us that has given this new spring to your existence?"

"More likely it is the pleasure I feel in seeing you back again," said Massy; and his cheek grew crimson as he spoke.

"'Tis too good you are to me—too good," said Billy; and his eyes ran over in tears, while he turned away his head to hide his emotion; "but sure it is part of yourself I do be growing every day I live. At first I couldn't bear the thought of going away to live in exile, in a wilderness, as one may say; but now that I see your heart set upon it, and that your vigour and strength comes back just by the mere anticipation of it, I'm downright delighted with the plan."

"Indeed!" said the youth, dreamily.

"To be sure I am," resumed Billy; "and I do be thinking there's a kind of poethry in carrying away into the solitary pine-forest minds stored with classic lore, to be able to read one's Horace beside the gushin' stream that flows on nameless and unknown, and con over ould Herodotus, amidst adventures stranger than ever he told himself."

"It might be a happy life," said the other, slowly, almost moodily.

"Ay, and it will be," said Billy, confidently. "Think of yourself, mounted on that saddle on a wild prairie horse, galloping free as the wind itself over the wide savannahs, with a drove of rushing buffaloes in career before you, and so eager in pursuit that you won't stop to bring down the scarlet-winged bustard that swings on the branch above you. There they go, plungin' and snortin', the mad devils, with a force that would sweep a fortress before them; and here are we after them, makin' the dark woods echo again with our wild yells. That's what will warm up our blood, till we'll not be afeard to meet an army of dragoons them-

selves. Them pistols once belonged to Cariatoké, a chief from Scio; and that blade—a real Damascus—was worn by an Aga of the Janissaries. Isn't it a picture?"

The youth poised the sword in his hand, and laid it down without a word; while Billy continued to stare at him with an expression of intensest amazement.

"Is it that you don't care for it all now, that your mind is changed, and that you don't wish for the life we were talkin' over these three weeks? Say so at once, my own darlin', and here I am, ready and willin' never to think more of it. Only tell me what's passin' in your heart—I ask no more."

"I scarcely know it myself," said the youth. "I feel as though in a dream, and know not what is real and what fiction."

"How have you passed your time? What were you doin' while I was away?"

"Dreaming, I believe," said the other, with a sigh. "Some embers of my old ambition warmed up into a flame once more, and I fancied that there was that in me that by toil and labour might yet win upwards; and that, if so, this mere life of action would but bring repining and regret, and that I

should feel as one who chose the meaner casket of fate, when both were within my reach."

"So you were at work again in the studio?"

"I have been finishing the arm of the Faun in that pavilion outside the town." A flush of crimson covered his face as he spoke, which Billy as quickly noticed, but misinterpreted.

"Ay, and they praised you, I'll be bound. They said it was the work of one whose genius would place him with the great ones of art, and that he who could do this while scarcely more than a boy, might, in riper years, be the great name of his century. Did they not tell you so?"

"No; not that, not that," said the other, slowly.

"Then they bade you go on, and strive and labour hard to develop into life the seeds of that glorious gift that was in you?"

"Nor that," sighed the youth, heavily, while a faint spot of crimson burned on one cheek, and a feverish lustre lit up his eye.

"They didn't dispraise what you done, did they?" broke in Billy. "They could not,

if they wanted to do it; but sure there's nobody would have the cruel heart to blight the ripenin' bud of genius—to throw gloom over a spirit that has to struggle against its own misgivins?"

"You wrong them, my dear friend; their words were all kindness and affection. They gave me hope and encouragement too. They fancy that I have in me what will one day grow into fame itself; and even you, Billy, in your most sanguine hopes, have never dreamed of greater success for me than they have predicted in the calm of a moonlit saunter."

"May the saints in heaven reward them for it!" said Billy, and in his clasped hands and uplifted eyes was all the fervour of a prayer. "They have my best blessin' for their goodness," muttered he to himself.

"And so I am again a sculptor!" said Massy, rising and walking the room. "Upon this career my whole heart and soul are henceforth to be concentrated; my fame, my happiness are to be those of the artist. From this day and this hour let every thought of what—not what I once was, but what I had hoped to be, be banished from

my heart. I am Sebastian Greppi. Never let another name escape your lips to me. I will not, even for a second, turn from the path in which my own exertions are to win the goal. Let the far-away land of my infancy, its traditions, its associations, be but dreams for evermore. Forwards! forwards!" cried he, passionately, "not a glance, not a look, towards the past."

Billy stared with admiration at the youth, over whose features a glow of enthusiasm was now diffused, and in broken, unconnected words, spoke encouragement and good cheer.

"I know well," said the youth, "how this same stubborn pride must be rooted out—how these false, deceitful visions of a stand and a station that I am never to attain must give place to nobler and higher aspirations; and you, my dearest friend, must aid me in all this—unceasingly, unwearyingly reminding me that to myself alone must I look for anything; and that if I would have a country, a name, or a home, it is by the toil of this head and these hands they are to be won. My plan is this," said he, eagerly seizing the other's arm, and speaking with immense

rapidity: "A life not alone of labour, but of the simplest: not a luxury, not an indulgence; our daily meals the humblest, our dress the commonest, nothing that to provide shall demand a moment's forethought or care; no wants that shall turn our thoughts from this great object, no care for the requirements that others need. Thus mastering small ambitions and petty desires, we shall concentrate all our faculties on our art; and even the humblest may thus outstrip those whose higher gifts reject such discipline."

"You'll not live longer under the Duke's patronage, then?" said Traynor.

"Not an hour. I return to that garden no more. There's a cottage on the mountain road to Serravezza will suit us well: it stands alone and on an eminence, with a view over the plain and the sea beyond. You can see it from the door. There, to the left of the olive wood, lower down than the old ruin. We'll live there, Billy, and we'll make of that mean spot a hallowed one, where young enthusiasts in art will come, years hence, when we have passed away, to see the humble home Sebastian lived in—to sit

upon the grassy seat where he once sat, when dreaming of the mighty triumphs that have made him glorious." A wild burst of mocking laughter rung from the boy's lips as he said this; but its accents were less in derision of the boast, than a species of hysterical ecstasy at the vision he had conjured up.

"And why wouldn't it be so?" exclaimed Billy, ardently—"why wouldn't you be great and illustrious?"

The moment of excitement was now over, and the youth stood pale, silent, and almost sickly in appearance: great drops of perspiration, too, stood on his forehead, and his quivering lips were bloodless.

"These visions are like meteor streaks," said he, falteringly; "they leave the sky blacker than they found it! But come along, let us to work, and we'll soon forget mere speculation."

Of the life they now led each day exactly resembled the other. Rising early, the youth was in his studio at dawn; the faithful Billy, seated near, read for him while he worked. Watching, with a tact that only affection ever bestows, each changeful mood

of the youth's mind, Traynor varied the topics with the varying humours of the other, and thus little of actual conversation took place between them, though their minds journeyed along together. To eke out subsistence, even humble as theirs, the young sculptor was obliged to make small busts and figures for sale, and Billy disposed of them at Lucca and Pisa, making short excursions to these cities as need required.

The toil of the day over, they wandered out towards the sea-shore, taking the path which led through the olive road by the garden of the villa. At times the youth would steal away a moment from his companion, and enter the little park, with every avenue of which he was familiar; and although Billy noticed his absence, he strictly abstained from the slightest allusion to it. As he delayed longer and longer to return, Traynor maintained the same reserve, and thus there grew up gradually a secret between them — a mystery that neither ventured to approach. With a delicacy that seemed an instinct in his humble nature, Billy would now and then feign occupation or fatigue to excuse himself from

the evening stroll, and thus leave the youth free to wander as he wished; till at length it became a settled habit between them to separate at nightfall, to meet only on the morrow. These nights were spent in walking the garden around the villa, lingering stealthily amid the trees to watch the room where she was sitting, to catch a momentary glimpse of her figure as it passed the window, to hear perchance a few faint accents of her voice. Hours long would he so watch in the silent night, his whole soul steeped in a delicious dream wherein her image moved, and came and went, with every passing fancy. In the calm moonlight he would try to trace her footsteps in the gravel walk that led to the studio, and lingering near them, whisper to her words of love.

One night, as he loitered thus, he thought he was perceived, for as he suddenly emerged from a dark alley into a broad space where the moonlight fell strongly, he saw a figure on a terrace above him, but without being able to recognise to whom it belonged. Timidly and fearfully he retired within the shade, and crept noiselessly away, shocked at the very thought of discovery. The next

day he found a small bouquet of fresh flowers on the rustic seat beneath the window. At first he scarcely dared to touch it; but with a sudden flash of hope that it had been destined for himself, he pressed the flowers to his lips, and hid them in his bosom. Each night now the same present attracted him to the same place, and thus at once within his heart was lighted a flame of hope that illuminated all his being, making his whole life a glorious episode, and filling all the long hours of the day with thoughts of her who thus could think of him.

Life has its triumphant moments, its dreams of entrancing, ecstatic delight, when success has crowned a hard-fought struggle, or when the meed of other men's praise comes showered on us. The triumphs of heroism, of intellect, of noble endurance—the trials of temptation met and conquered—the glorious victory over self-interest—are all great and ennobling sensations; but what are they all compared with the first consciousness of being loved, of being to another the ideal we have made of her? To this nothing the world can give is equal. From the moment we have felt it, life changes

around us. Its crosses are but barriers opposed to our strong will, that to assail and storm is a duty. Then comes a heroism in meeting the every-day troubles of existence, as though we were soldiers in a good and holy cause. No longer unseen or unmarked in the great ocean of life, we feel there is an eye ever turned towards us, a heart ever throbbing with our own—that our triumphs are its triumphs—our sorrows its sorrows. Apart from all the intercourse with the world, with its changeful good and evil, we feel that we have a treasure that dangers cannot approach; we know that in our heart of hearts a blessed mystery is locked up—a well of pure thoughts that can calm down the most fevered hour of life's anxieties. So the youth felt, and, feeling so, was happy.

CHAPTER XIV.

A MINISTER'S LETTER.

"British Legation, Naples,
Nov. ——, 18—.

"MY DEAR HARCOURT,—Not mine the fault that your letter has lain six weeks unanswered; but having given up penwork myself for the last eight months, and Crawley, my private sec., being ill, the delay was unavoidable. The present communication you owe to the fortunate arrival here of Captain Mellish, who has kindly volunteered to be my amanuensis. I am indeed sorely grieved at this delay. I shall be *désolé* if it occasion you anything beyond inconvenience. How a private sec. should permit himself the luxury of an attack of influenza I cannot

conceive. We shall hear of one's hairdresser having the impertinence to catch cold, to-morrow or next day!

"If I don't mistake, it was you yourself recommended Crawley to me, and I am only half grateful for the service. He is a man of small prejudices; fancies that he ought to have a regular hour for dinner; thinks that he should have acquaintances; and will persist in imagining himself an existent something, appertaining to the Legation,—while, in reality, he is only a shadowy excrescence of my own indolent habits, the recipient of the trashy superfluities one commits to paper, and calls despatches. Latterly, in my increasing laziness, I have used him for more intimate correspondence; and, as Doctor Allitore has now denied me all manual exertion whatever, I am actually wholly dependent on such aid. I'm sure I long for the discovery of some other mode of transmitting one's brain-efforts than by the slow process of manuscript—some photographic process, that by a series of bright pictures might display *en tableau* what one is now reduced to

accomplish by narrative. As it ever did, and ever will happen too, they have deluged me with work when I crave rest. Every session of Parliament must have its blue book; and by the devil's luck they have decided that Italy is to furnish the present one.

"You have always been a soldier, and whenever your inspecting general came his round, your whole care has been to make the troop horses look as fat, the men's whiskers as trim, their overalls as clean, and their curb-chains as bright, as possible. You never imagined or dreamed of a contingency when it would be desirable that the animals should be all sorebacked, the whole regiment under stoppages, and the trumpeter in a quinsey. Had you been a diplomatist instead of a dragoon, this view of things might, perhaps, have presented itself, and the chief object of your desire have been to show that the system under which you functionated worked as ill as need be; that the court to which you were accredited abhorred you; its Ministers snubbed, its small officials slighted you; that all your communications were ill received,

your counsels ill taken; that what you reprobated was adopted, what you advised rejected; in fact, that the only result of your presence was the maintenance of a perpetual ill will and bad feeling; and that without the aid of a line-of-battle ship, or at least a frigate, your position was no longer tenable. From the moment, my dear H——, that you can establish this fact, you start into life as an able and active Minister, imbued with thoroughly British principles—an active asserter of what is due to his country's rights and dignity, not truckling to court favour, or tamely submitting to royal impertinences—not like the noble lord at this place, or the more subservient viscount at that—but, in plain words, an admirable public servant, whose reward, whatever courts and cabinets may do, will always be willingly accorded by a grateful nation.

"I am afraid this sketch of a special envoy's career will scarcely tempt you to exchange for a mission abroad! And you are quite right, my dear friend. It is a very unrewarding profession. I often wish myself

that I had taken something in the colonies, or gone into the Church, or some other career which had given me time and opportunity to look after my health; of which, by the way, I have but an indifferent account to render you. These people here can't hit it off at all, Harcourt; they keep muddling away about indigestion, deranged functions, and the rest of it. The mischief is in the blood; I mean, in the undue distribution of the blood. So Treysenac, the man of Bagnères, proved to me. There is a flux and reflux in us, as in the tides, and when, from deficient energy, or lax muscular power, that ceases, we are all driven by artificial means to remedy the defect. Treysenac's theory is position. By a number of ingeniously contrived positions he accomplishes an artificial congestion of any part he pleases; and in his establishment at Bagnères you may see some fifty people strung up by the arms and legs, by the waists or the ankles, in the most marvellous manner, and with truly fabulous success. I myself passed three mornings suspended by the middle, like the sheep in

the decoration of the Golden Fleece, and was amazed at the strange sensations I experienced before I was cut down.

"You know the obstinacy with which the medical people reject every discovery in the art, and only sanction its employment when the world has decreed in its favour. You will, therefore, not be surprised to hear that Larrey and Cooper, to whom I wrote about Treysenac's theory, sent me very unsatisfactory, indeed very unseemly, replies. I have resolved, however, not to let the thing drop, and am determined to originate a Suspensorium in England, when I can chance upon a man of intelligence and scientific knowledge to conduct it. Like mesmerism, the system has its antipathies, and thus yesterday Crawley fainted twice after a few minutes' suspension by the arms. But he is a bigot about anything he hears for the first time, and I was not sorry at his punishment.

"I wish you would talk over this matter with any clever medical man in your neighbourhood, and let me hear the result.

"And so you are surprised, you say, how

little influence English representations exercise over the determinations of foreign cabinets. I go further, and confess no astonishment at all at the no-influence! My dear dragoon, have you not, some hundred and fifty times in this life, endured a small martyrdom in seeing a very indifferent rider torment almost to madness the animal he bestrode, just by sheer ignorance and awkwardness—now worrying the flank with incautious heel, now irritating the soft side of the mouth with incessant jerkings—always counteracting the good impulses, ever prompting the bad ones of his beast? And have you not, while heartily wishing yourself in the saddle, felt the utter inutility of administering any counsels to the rider? You saw, and rightly saw, that even if he attempted to follow your suggestions, he would do so awkwardly and inaptly, acting at wrong moments and without that continuity of purpose which must ever accompany an act of address; and that for his safety, and even for the welfare of the animal, it were as well they should jog on together as they had done,

trusting that after a time they might establish a sort of compromise, endurable, if not beneficial to both.

"Such, my dear friend, in brief, is the state of many of those foreign governments to whom we are so profuse of our wise counsels. It were doubtless much better if they ruled well; but let us see if the road to this knotty consummation be by the adoption of methods totally new to them, estranged from all their instincts and habits, and full of perils, which their very fears will exaggerate. Constitutional governments, like underdone roast beef, suit our natures and our latitude; but they would seem lamentable experiments when tried south of the Alps. Liberty with us means the right to break heads at a county election, and to print impertinences in newspapers. With the Spaniard or the Italian it would be to carry a poniard more openly, and use it more frequently than at present.

"At all events, if it be any satisfaction to you, you may be assured that the rulers in all these cases are not much better off than

those they rule over. They lead lives of incessant terror, distrust, and anxiety. Their existence is poisoned by ceaseless fears of treachery—they know not where. They change ministers as travellers change the direction of their journey, to disconcert the supposed plans of their enemies; and they vacillate between cruelty and mercy, really not knowing in which lies their safety. Don't fancy that they have any innate pleasure in harsh measures. The likelihood is, they hate them as much as you do yourself; but they know no other system; and to come back to my cavalry illustration, the only time they tried a snaffle, they were run away with.

"I trust these prosings will be a warning to you how you touch upon politics again in a letter to me; but I really did not wish to be a bore, and now here I am, ready to answer, so far as in me lies, all your interrogatories; first premising that I am not at liberty to enter upon the question of Glencore himself, and for the simple reason, that he has made me his confidant. And now, as to the boy,

I could make nothing of him, Harcourt; and for this reason—he had not what sailors call "steerage way" on him. He went wherever you bade, but without an impulse. I tried to make him care for his career—for the gay world—for the butterfly life of young diplomacy—for certain dissipations — excellent things occasionally to develop nascent faculties. I endeavoured to interest him by literary society and savans, but unsuccessfully. For art indeed he showed some disposition, and modelled prettily; but it never rose above 'amateurship.' Now enthusiam, although a very excellent ingredient, will no more make an artist, than a brisk kitchen fire will provide a dinner where all the materials are wanting.

"I began to despair of him, Harcourt, when I saw that there were no features about him. He could do everything reasonably well; because there was no hope of his doing anything with real excellence. He wandered away from me to Carrara, with his quaint companion the doctor; and after some months wrote me rather a sturdy letter,

rejecting all moneyed advances, past and future, and saying something very haughty, and of course very stupid, about the 'glorious sense of independence.' I replied, but he never answered me, and here might have ended all my knowledge of his history, had not a letter, of which I send you an extract, resumed the narrative. The writer is the Princess Sabloukoff, a lady of whose attractions and fascinations you have often heard me speak. When you have read and thought over the enclosed, let me have your opinion. I do not, I cannot believe in the rumour you allude to. Glencore is not the man to marry at his time of life, and in his circumstances. Send me, however, all the particulars you are in possession of. I hope they don't mean to send you to India, because you seem to dislike it. For my own part, I suspect I should enjoy that country immensely. Heat is the first element of daily comfort, and all the appliances to moderate it are *ex officio* luxuries; besides that in India there is a splendid and enlarged selfishness in the mode of life, very different

from the petty egotisms of our rude Northland.

"If you do go, pray take Naples in the way. The route by Alexandria and Suez, they all tell me, is the best and most expeditious.

"Mellish desires me to add his remembrances, hoping you have not forgotten him. He served in the 'Fifth' with you in Canada; that is, if you be the same George Harcourt who played Tony Lumpkin so execrably at Montreal. I have told him it is probable, and am yours ever,

"H. U."

CHAPTER XV.

HARCOURT'S LODGINGS.

When Harcourt had finished the reading of that letter we have presented in our last chapter, he naturally turned for information on the subject which principally interested him to the enclosure. It was a somewhat bulky packet, and, from its size, at once promised very full and ample details. As he opened it, however, he discovered it was in various handwritings; but his surprise was further increased by the following heading, in large letters, in the top of a page: "Sulphur Question," and beginning, "My lord, by a reference to my despatch, No. 478, you will perceive that the difficul-

ties which the Neapolitan Government——" Harcourt turned over the page. It was all in the same strain. Tariffs, treaties, dues, and duties, occurred in every line. Three other documents of like nature accompanied this; after which came a very ill-written scrawl on coarse paper, entitled, "Hints as to diet and daily exercise for his Excellency's use."

The honest Colonel, who was not the quickest of men, was some time before he succeeded in unravelling to his satisfaction the mystery before him, and recognising that the papers on his table had been destined for a different address, while the letter of the Princess had, in all probability, been despatched to the Foreign Office, and was now either confounding or amusing the authorities in Downing-street. While Harcourt laughed over the blunder, he derived no small gratification from thinking that nothing but great geniuses ever fell into these mistakes, and was about to write off in this very spirit to Upton, when he sud-

denly bethought him that, before an answer could arrive, he himself would be far away on his journey to India.

"I asked nothing," said he, "that could be difficult to reply to. It was plain enough, too, that I only wanted such information as he could have given me off-hand. If I could but assure Glencore that the boy was worthy of him—that there was stuff to give good promise of future excellence—that he was honourable and manly in all his dealings—who knows what effect such assurance might have had? There are days when it strikes me Glencore would give half his fortune to have the youth beside him, and be able to call him his own. Why he cannot, does not do it, is a mystery which I am unable to fathom. He never gave me his confidence on this head; indeed, he gave me something very like a rebuff one evening, when he erroneously fancied that I wanted to probe the mysterious secret. It shows how much he knows of my nature," added he, laughing. "Why, I'd rather carry a

man's trunk or his portmanteau on my back than his family secrets in my heart. I could rest and lay down my burden in the one case—in the other, there's never a moment of repose! And now Glencore is to be here this very day—the ninth—to learn my news. The poor fellow comes up from Wales, just to talk over these matters, and I have nothing to offer him but this blundering epistle. Ay, here's the letter:

"'DEAR HARCOURT,—Let me have a mutton-chop with you on the ninth, and give me, if you can, the evening after it.—Yours,

'GLENCORE.'

"A man must be ill off for counsel and advice when he thinks of such aid as mine. Heaven knows I never was such a brilliant manager of my own fortunes, that any one should trust his destinies in my hands. Well, he shall have the mutton-chop, and a good glass of old port after it; and the evening, or, if he likes it, the night shall be at

his disposal." And with this resolve, Harcourt, having given orders for dinner at six, issued forth to stroll down to his club, and drop in at the Horse Guards, and learn as much as he could of the passing events of the day,—meaning, thereby, the details of whatever regarded the army-list, and those who walk in scarlet attire.

It was about five o'clock of a dreary November afternoon that a hackney-coach drew up at Harcourt's lodgings in Dover-street, and a tall and very sickly-looking man, carrying his carpet-bag in one hand and a dressing-case in the other, descended and entered the house.

"Mr. Massy, sir?" said the Colonel's servant, as he ushered him in; for such was the name Glencore desired to be known by. And the stranger nodded, and throwing himself wearily down on a sofa, seemed overcome with fatigue.

"Is your master out?" asked he, at length.

"Yes, sir; but I expect him immediately. Dinner was ordered for six, and he'll be

back to dress half an hour before that time."

"Dinner for two?" half impatiently asked the other.

"Yes, sir, for two."

"And all visitors in the evening denied admittance? Did your master say so?"

"Yes, sir; out for every one."

Glencore now covered his face with his hands, and relapsed into silence. At length he lifted his eyes till they fell upon a coloured drawing over the chimney. It was an officer in hussar uniform, mounted on a splendid charger, and seated with all the graceful ease of a consummate horseman. This much alone he could perceive from where he lay, and indolently raising himself on one arm, he asked if it were "a portrait of his master?"

"No, sir—of my master's colonel, Lord Glencore, when he commanded the Eighth, and was said to be the handsomest man in the service."

"Show it to me!" cried he, eagerly, and almost snatched the drawing from the other's

hands. He gazed at it intently and fixedly, and his sallow cheek once reddened slightly as he continued to look.

"That never was a likeness!" said he, bitterly.

"My master thinks it a wonderful resemblance, sir; not of what he is now, of course; but that was taken fifteen years ago or more."

"And is he so changed since that?" asked the sick man, plaintively.

"So I hear, sir. He had a stroke of some kind, or fit of one sort or another, brought on by fretting. They took away his title, I'm told. They made out that he had no right to it, that he wasn't the real lord; but here's the colonel, sir;" and almost as he spoke Harcourt's step was on the stair. The next moment his hand was cordially clasped in that of his guest.

"I scarcely expected you before six; and how have you borne the journey?" cried he, taking a seat beside the sofa. A gentle motion of the eyebrows gave the reply.

"Well, well, you'll be all right after the soup. Marcom, serve the dinner at once. I'll not dress—and mind, no admittance to any one."

"You have heard from Upton?" asked Glencore.

"Yes."

"And satisfactorily?" asked he, more anxiously.

"Quite so; but you shall know all by-and-by. I have got mackerel for you. It was a favourite dish of yours long ago, and you shall taste such mutton as your Welsh mountains can't equal. I got the haunch from the Ardennes a week ago, and kept it for you."

"I wish I deserved such generous fare; but I have only an invalid's stomach," said Glencore, smiling faintly.

"You shall be reported well, and fit for duty to-day, or my name is not George Harcourt. The strongest and toughest fellow that ever lived couldn't stand up against the united effects of low diet and low spirits. To act generously and think generously, you

must live generously, take plenty of exercise, breathe fresh air, and know what it is to be downright weary when you go to bed; not bored, mark you, for that's another thing. Now, here comes the soup, and you shall tell me whether turtle be not the best restorative a man ever took after twelve hours of the road."

Whether tempted by the fare, or anxious to gratify the hospitable wishes of his host, Glencore ate heartily, and drank what for his abstemious habit was freely, and, so far as a more genial air and a more ready smile went, fully justified Harcourt's anticipations.

"By Jove! you're more like yourself than I have seen you this many a day," said the Colonel, as they drew their chairs towards the fire, and sat with that now banished, but ever to be regretted, little spider-table, that once emblematised after-dinner blessedness, between them. "This reminds one of long ago, Glencore, and I don't see why we cannot bring to the hour some of the cheerfulness that we once boasted."

A faint, very faint smile, with more of

sorrow than joy in it, was the other's only reply.

"Look at the thing this way, Glencore," said Harcourt, eagerly. "So long as a man has, either by his fortune or by his personal qualities, the means of benefiting others, there is a downright selfishness in shutting himself up in his sorrow, and saying to the world, 'My own griefs are enough for me; I'll take no care or share in yours.' Now, there never was a fellow with less of this selfishness than you——"

"Do not speak to me of what I was, my dear friend. There's not a plank of the old craft remaining. The name alone lingers, and even that will soon be extinct."

"So, then, you still hold to this stern resolution? Shall I tell you what I think of it?"

"Perhaps you had better not do so," said Glencore, sternly.

"By Jove! then, I will, just for that menace," said Harcourt. "I said, 'This is vengeance on Glencore's part.'"

"To whom, sir, did you make this remark?"

"To myself, of course. I never alluded to the matter to any other. Never."

"So far, well," said Glencore, solemnly; "for, had you done so, we had never exchanged words again!"

"My dear fellow," said Harcourt, laying his hand affectionately on the other's, "I can well imagine the price a sensitive nature like yours must pay for the friendship of one so little gifted with tact as I am. But, remember always that there's this advantage in the intercourse: you can afford to hear and bear things from a man of *my* stamp, that would be outrages from perhaps the lips of a brother. As Upton, in one of his bland moments, once said to me, 'Fellows like you, Harcourt, are the bitters of the human pharmacopœia, somewhat hard to take, but very wholesome when you're once swallowed.'"

"You are the best of the triad, and no great praise that, either," muttered Glencore to himself. After a pause he continued:

"It has not been from any distrust in your friendship, Harcourt, that I have not spoken to you before on this gloomy subject. I know well that you bear me more affection than any one of all those who call themselves my friends; but when a man is about to do that which never can meet approval from those who love him, he seeks no counsel, he invites no confidence. Like the gambler, who risks all on a single throw, he makes his venture from the impulse of a secret mysterious prompting within, that whispers, 'With this you are rescued or ruined!' Advice, counsel!" cried he, in bitter mockery, "tell me, when have such ever alleviated the tortures of a painful malady? Have you ever heard that the writhings of the sick man were calmed by the honeyed words of his friends at the bedside? I"—here his voice became full and loud—"I was burdened with a load too great for me to bear. It had bowed me to the earth, and all but crushed me! The sense of an unaccomplished vengeance was like a debt which, unrequited ere I died, sent me to my grave dishonoured.

Which of you all could tell me how to endure this? What shape could your philosophy assume?"

"Then I guessed aright," broke in Harcourt. "This was done in vengeance."

"I have no reckoning to render you, sir," said Glencore, haughtily; "for any confidence of mine, you are more indebted to my passion than to my inclination. I came up here to speak and confer with you about this boy, whose guardianship you are unable to continue longer. Let us speak of that."

"Yes," said Harcourt, in his habitual tone of easy good humour, "they are going to send me out to India again. I have had eighteen years of it already; but I have no Parliamentary influence, nor could I trace a fortieth cousinship with the House of Lords; but, after all, it might be worse. Now, as to this lad, what if I were to take him out with me? This artist life that he seems to have adopted scarcely promises much."

"Let me see Upton's letter," said Glencore, gravely.

"There it is. But I must warn you that

the really important part is wanting; for, instead of sending us, as he promised, the communication of his Russian Princess, he has stuffed in a mass of papers intended for Downing-street, and a lot of doctor's prescriptions, for whose loss he is doubtless suffering martyrdom."

"Is this credible?" cried Glencore.

"There they are, very eloquent about sulphur, and certain refugees with long names, and with some curious hints about Spanish flies and the flesh-brush."

Glencore flung down the papers in indignation, and walked up and down the room without speaking.

"I'd wager a trifle," cried Harcourt, "that Madame—What's-her-name's letter has gone to the Foreign Office in lieu of the despatches; and, if so, they have certainly gained most by the whole transaction."

"You have scarcely considered, perhaps, what publicity may thus be given to my private affairs," said Glencore. "Who knows what this woman may have said—what allusions her letter may contain?"

"Very true. I never did think of that," muttered Harcourt.

"Who knows what circumstances of my private history are now banded about from desk to desk by flippant fools, to be disseminated afterwards over Europe by every courier?" cried he, with increasing passion.

Before Harcourt could reply, the servant entered, and whispered a few words in his ear. "But you already denied me," said Harcourt. "You told him that I was from home?"

"Yes, sir; but he said that his business was so important that he'd wait for your return, if I could not say where he might find you. This is his card."

Harcourt took it, and read, "Major Scaresby, from Naples." "What think you, Glencore? Ought we to admit this gentleman? It may be that his visit relates to what we have been speaking about?"

"Scaresby—Scaresby—I know the name," muttered Glencore. "To be sure! There was a fellow that hung about Florence and Rome long ago, and called himself Scaresby;

an ill-tongued old scandal-monger, people encouraged in a land where newspapers are not permitted."

"He affects to have something very pressing to communicate. Perhaps it were better to have him up."

"Don't make me known to him, then, or let me have to talk to him," said Glencore, throwing himself down on a sofa; "and let his visit be as brief as you can manage."

Harcourt made a significant sign to his servant, and the moment after the Major was heard ascending the stairs.

"Very persistent of me, you'll say, Colonel Harcourt. Devilish tenacious of my intentions, to force myself thus upon you!" said the Major, as he bustled into the room, with a white leather bag in his hand; "but I promised Upton I'd not lie down on a bed till I saw you."

"All the apologies should come from my side, Major," said Harcourt, as he handed him to a chair; "but the fact was, that having an invalid friend with me, quite incapable of seeing company, and having mat-

ters of some importance to discuss with him——"

"Just so," broke in Scaresby; "and if it were not that I had given a very strong pledge to Upton, I'd have given my message to your servant, and gone off to my hotel. But he laid great stress on my seeing you, and obtaining certain papers which, if I understand aright, have reached you in mistake, being meant for the Minister at Downing-street. Here's his own note, however, which will explain all."

It ran thus:

"DEAR H——,—So I find that some of the despatches have got into your enclosure instead of that 'on his Majesty's service.' I therefore send off the insupportable old bore who will deliver this, to rescue them, and convey them to their fitting destination. 'The extraordinaries' will be burdened to some fifty or sixty pounds for it; but they very rarely are expended so profitably as in getting rid of an intolerable nuisance. Give him all the things, therefore, and pack him

off to Downing-street. I'm far more uneasy, however, about some prescriptions which I suspect are along with them. One, a lotion for the cervical vertebræ, of invaluable activity, which you may take a copy of, but strictly, on honour, for your own use only. Scaresby will obtain the Princess's letter, and hand it to you. It is certain not to have been opened at F. O., as they never read anything not alluded to in the private correspondence.

"This blunder has done me a deal of harm. My nerves are not in a state to stand such shocks; and though, in fact, you are not the culpable party, I cannot entirely acquit you for having in part occasioned it." Harcourt laughed good humouredly at this, and continued: "If you care for it, old S. will give you all the last gossip from these parts, and be the channel of yours to me. But don't dine him; he's not worth a dinner. He'll only repay sherry and soda-water, and one of those execrable cheroots you used to be famed for. Amongst the recipes, let me recommend you an admirable tonic, the prin-

cipal ingredient in which is the oil of the star-fish. It will probably produce nausea, vertigo, and even fainting for a week or two; but these symptoms decline at last, and, except violent hiccup, no other inconvenience remains. Try it, at all events.

"Yours ever,

"H. U."

While Harcourt perused this short epistle, Scaresby, on the invitation of his host, had helped himself freely to the Madeira, and a plate of devilled biscuits beside it, giving, from time to time, oblique glances toward the dark corner of the room, where Glencore lay apparently asleep.

"I hope Upton's letter justifies my insistance, Colonel. He certainly gave me to understand that the case was a pressing one," said Scaresby.

"Quite so, Major Scaresby; and I have only to reiterate my excuses for having denied myself to you. But you are aware of the reason;" and he glanced towards where Glencore was lying.

"Very excellent fellow, Upton," said the Major, sipping his wine, "but very—what shall I call it?—eccentric—very odd—not like any one else, you know, in the way he does things. I happened to be one of his guests t'other day. He had detained us above an hour waiting dinner, when he came in all flurried and excited, and turning to me, said, 'Scaresby, have you any objection to a trip to England at his Majesty's expense?' and as I replied, 'None whatever; indeed, it would suit my book to perfection just now,' 'Well, then,' said he, 'get your traps together, and be here within an hour. I'll have all in readiness for you.' I did not much fancy starting off in this fashion, and without my dinner, too; but, egad, he's one of those fellows that don't stand parleying, and so I just took him at his word, and here I am. I take it the matter must be a very emergent one—eh?"

"It is clear Sir Horace Upton thought so," said Harcourt, rather amused than offended by the other's curiosity.

"There's a woman in it, somehow, I'll be bound—eh?"

Harcourt laughed heartily at this sally, and pushed the decanter towards his guest.

"Not that I'd give sixpence to know every syllable of the whole transaction," said Scaresby. "A man that has passed, as I have, the last twenty-five years of his life between Rome, Florence, and Naples, has devilish little to learn of what the world calls scandal."

"I suppose you must indeed possess a wide experience," said Harcourt.

"Not a man in Europe, sir, could tell you as many dark passages of good society! I kept a kind of book once—a record of fashionable delinquencies; but I had to give it up. It took me half my day to chronicle even the passing events; and then my memory grew so retentive by practice I didn't want the reference, but could give you date, and name, and place for every incident that has scandalised the world for the last quarter of the century."

"And do you still possess this wonderful gift, Major?"

"Pretty well; not, perhaps, to the same extent I once did. You see, Colonel Harcourt"—here his voice became low and confidential—"some twenty, or indeed fifteen years back, it was only persons of actual condition that permitted themselves the liberty to do these things; but, hang it, sir, now you have your middle-class folk as profligate as their betters. Jones, or Smith, or Thompson runs away with his neighbour's wife, cheats at cards, and forges his friend's name, just as if he had the best blood in his veins, and fourteen quarterings on his escutcheon. What memory, then, I ask you, could retain all the short-comings of these people?"

"But I'd really not trouble my head with such ignoble delinquents," said Harcourt.

"Nor do I, sir, save when, as will sometimes happen, they have a footing, with one leg at least, in good society. For, in the present state of the world, a woman with a

pretty face, and a man with a knowledge of horseflesh, may move in any circle they please."

"You're a severe censor of the age we live in, I see," said Harcourt, smiling. "At the same time, the offences could scarcely give you much uneasiness, or you'd not take up your residence where they most abound."

"If you want to destroy tigers, you must frequent the jungle," said Scaresby, with one of his heartiest laughs.

"Say, rather, if you have the vulture's appetite, you must go where there is carrion!" cried Glencore, with a voice to which passion lent a savage vehemence.

"Eh! ha! very good! devilish smart of your sick friend. Pray present me to him," said Scaresby, rising.

"No, no, never mind him," whispered Harcourt, pressing him down into his seat. "At some other time, perhaps. He is nervous and irritable. Conversation fatigues him, too."

"Egad! that was neatly said, though; I hope I shall not forget it. One envies these

sick fellows, sometimes, the venom they get from bad health. But I am forgetting myself in the pleasure of your society," added he, rising from the table, as he finished off the last glass in the decanter. "I shall call at Downing-street to-morrow for that letter of Upton's, and with your permission will deposit it in your hands afterwards."

Harcourt accompanied him to the door with thanks. Profuse, indeed, was he in his recognitions, desiring to get him clear off the ground before any further allusions on his part, or rejoinders from Glencore, might involve them all in new complications.

"I know that fellow well," cried Glencore, almost ere the door closed on him. "He is just what I remember him some twenty years ago. Dressed up in the cast-off vices of his betters, he has passed for a man of fashion amongst his own set, while he is regarded as a wit by those who mistake malevolence for humour. I ask no other test of a society than that such a man is endured in it."

"I sometimes suspect," said Harcourt,

"that the world never believes these fellows to be as ill-natured as their tongues bespeak them."

"You are wrong, George; the world knows them well. The estimation they are held in is, for the reflective flattery by which each listener to their sarcasms soothes his own conscience as he says, 'I could be just as bitter, if I consented to be as bad.'"

"I cannot at all account for Upton's endurance of such a man," said Harcourt.

"As there are men who fancy that they strengthen their animal system by braving every extreme of climate, so Upton imagines that he invigorates his *morale* by associating with all kinds and descriptions of people; and there is no doubt that in doing so he extends the sphere of his knowledge of mankind. After all," muttered he, with a sigh, "it's only learning the geography of a land too unhealthy to live in."

Glencore arose as he said this, and with a nod of leave-taking retired to his room.

CHAPTER XVI.

A FEVERED MIND.

HARCOURT passed the morning of the following day in watching the street for Scaresby's arrival. Glencore's impatience had grown into absolute fever to obtain the missing letter, and he kept asking every moment at what hour he had promised to be there; and wondering at his delay.

Noon passed over—one o'clock—it was now nearly half-past, as a carriage drove hastily to the door.

"At last," cried Glencore, with a deep sigh.

"Sir Gilbert Bruce, sir, requests to know if you can receive him," said the servant to Harcourt.

"Another disappointment!" muttered Glencore, as he left the room, when Harcourt motioned to the servant to introduce the visitor.

"My dear Colonel Harcourt," cried the other, entering, "excuse a very abrupt call—but I have a most pressing need of your assistance. I hear you can inform me of Lord Glencore's address."

"He is residing in North Wales at present. I can give you his post town."

"Yes, but can I be certain that he will admit me if I should go down there? He is living, I hear, in strict retirement, and I am anxious for a personal interview."

"I cannot ensure you that," said Harcourt. "He does live, as you have heard, entirely estranged from all society. But if you write to him——"

"Ah! there's the difficulty. A letter and its reply takes some days."

"And is the matter, then, so very imminent?"

"It is so; at least it is thought to be so by an authority that neither you nor I will

be likely to dispute. You know his lordship intimately, I fancy?"

"Perhaps I may call myself as much his friend as any man living."

"Well, then, I may confide to you my business with him. It happened that a few days back, Lord Adderley was on a visit with the King at Brighton, when a foreign messenger arrived with despatches. They were of course forwarded to him there; and as the King has a passion for that species of literature, he opened them all himself. Now, I suspect that his Majesty cares more for the amusing incidents which occasionally diversify the life of foreign courts, than for the great events of politics. At all events, he devours them with avidity, and seems conversant with the characters and private affairs of some hundreds of people he has never seen, nor in all likelihood will ever see! In turning over the loose pages of one of the despatches from Naples, I think, he came upon what appeared to be a fragment of a letter. Of what it was, or what it contained, I have not the slightest knowledge. Adder-

ley himself has not seen it, nor any one but the King. All I know is, that it concerns in some way Lord Glencore; for immediately on reading it he gave me instructions to find him out, and send him down to Brighton."

"I am afraid, were you to see Glencore, your mission would prove a failure. He has given up the world altogether, and even a royal command would scarcely withdraw him from his retirement."

"At all events, I must make the trial. You can let me have his address, and, perhaps, you would do more, and give me some sort of introduction to him—something that might smooth down the difficulty of a first visit."

Harcourt was silent, and stood for some seconds in deep thought, which the other, mistaking for a sign of unwillingness to comply with his request, quickly added, "If my demand occasion you any inconvenience, or if there be the slightest difficulty——"

"Nay, nay, I was not thinking of that," said Harcourt. "Pray excuse me for a moment. I will fetch you the address you

spoke of;" and, without waiting for more, he left the room. The next minute he was in Glencore's room, hurriedly narrating to him all that had passed, and asking him what course he should pursue. Glencore heard the story with a greater calm than Harcourt dared to hope for; and seemed pleased at the reiterated assurance that the King alone had seen the letter referred to; and when Harcourt abruptly asked what was to be done, he slowly replied, "I must obey his Majesty's commands. I must go to Brighton."

"But are you equal to all this? Have you strength for it?"

"I think so; at all events, I am determined to make the effort. I was a favourite with his Majesty long ago. He will say nothing to hurt me needlessly; nor is it in his nature to do so. Tell Bruce that you will arrange everything, and that I shall present myself to-morrow at the palace."

"Remember, Glencore, that if you say so——"

"I must be sure and keep my word. Well, so I mean, George. I was a courtier once

upon a time, and have not outlived my deference to a sovereign. I'll be there—you may answer for me."

From the moment that Glencore had come to this resolve, a complete change seemed to pass over the nature of the man. It was as though a new spring had been given to his existence. The reformation that all the blandishments of friendship, all the soft influences of kindness could never accomplish, was more than half effected by the mere thought of an interview with a King, and the possible chance of a little royal sympathy!

If Harcourt was astonished, he was not the less pleased at all this. He encouraged Glencore's sense of gratification by every means in his power, and gladly lent himself to all the petty anxieties about dress and appearance in which he seemed now immersed. Nothing could exceed, indeed, the care he bestowed on these small details; ever insisting as he did that his Majesty being the best-dressed gentleman in Europe,

these matters assumed a greater importance in his eyes.

"I must try to recover somewhat of my former self," said he. "There was a time when I came and went freely to Carlton House, when I was somewhat more than a mere frequenter of the Prince's society. They tell me that of late he is glad to see any of those who partook of his intimacy in those times; who can remember the genial spirits who made his table the most brilliant circle of the world; who can talk to him of Hanger, and Kelly, and Sheridan, and the rest of them. I spent my days and nights with them."

Warming with the recollection of a period which, dissolute and dissipated as it was, yet redeemed by its brilliancy many of its least valuable features, Glencore poured forth story after story of a time when statesmen had the sportiveness of schoolboys, and the greatest intellects loved to indulge in the wildest excesses of folly. A good jest upon Eldon, a smart epigram on Sidmouth,

a quiz against Vansittart, was a fortune at Court; and there grew up thus around the Prince a class who cultivated ridicule so assiduously, that nothing was too high or too venerable to escape their sarcasms.

Though Glencore was only emerging out of boyhood — a young subaltern in the Prince's own regiment, when he first entered this society, the impression it had made upon his mind was not the less permanent. Independently of the charm of being thus admitted to the most choice circle of the land, there was the fascination of intimacy with names that even amongst contemporaries were illustrious.

"I feel in such spirits to-day, George," cried Glencore at length, "that I vote we go and pass the day at Richmond. We shall escape the possibility of being bored by your acquaintance. We shall have a glorious stroll through the fields, and a pleasant dinner afterwards at the Star and Garter."

Only too well pleased at this sudden change in his friend's humour, Harcourt assented.

The day was a bright and clear one, with a sharp frosty air and that elasticity of atmosphere that invigorates and stimulates. They both soon felt its influence, and as the hours wore on, pleasant memories of the past were related, and old friends remembered and talked over in a spirit that brought back to each much of the youthful sentiments they recorded.

"If one could only go over it all again, George," said Glencore, as they sat after dinner, "up to three-and-twenty, or even a year or two later, I'd not ask to change a day—scarcely an hour. Whatever was deficient in fact, was supplied by hope. It was a joyous, brilliant time, when we all made partnership of our good spirits and traded freely on the capital. Even Upton was frank and free-hearted then. There were some six or eight of us, with just fortune enough never to care about money, and none of us so rich as to be immersed in dreams of gold, as ever happens with your millionaire. Why could we not have continued so to the end?"

Harcourt adroitly turned him from the theme which he saw impending—his departure for the Continent, his residence there, and his marriage—and once more occupied him in stories of his youthful life in London, when Glencore suddenly came to a stop, and said, "I might have married the greatest beauty of the time—of a family, too, second to none in all England. You know to whom I allude. Well, she would have accepted me; her father was not averse to the match; a stupid altercation with her brother, Lord Hervey, at Brookes's one night —an absurd dispute about some etiquette of the play-table—estranged me from their house. I was offended at what I deemed their want of courtesy in not seeking me—for I was in the right; every one said so. I determined not to call first. They gave a great entertainment, and omitted me, and rather than stay in town to publish this affront, I started for the Continent, and out of that petty incident, a discussion of the veriest trifle imaginable, there came the whole course of my destiny."

"To be sure," said Harcourt, with assumed calm, "every man's fortune in life is at the sport of some petty incident or other, which at the time he undervalues."

"And then we scoff at those men who scrutinise each move, and hesitate over every step in life, as triflers and little-minded; while, if your remark be just, it is exactly they who are the wise and prudent," cried Glencore, with warmth. "Had I, for instance, seen this occurrence, trivial as it was, in its true light, what and where might I not have been to-day?"

"My dear Glencore, the luckiest fellow that ever lived, were he only to cast a look back on opportunities neglected, and conjunctures unprofited by, would be sure to be miserable. I am far from saying that some have not more than their share of the world's sorrows; but, take my word for it, every one has his load, be it greater or less, and, what is worse, we all of us carry our burdens with as much inconvenience to ourselves as we can."

"I know what you would say, Harcourt.

It is the old story about giving way to passion, and suffering temper to get the better of one; but let me tell you that there are trials where passion is an instinct, and reason works too slowly. I have experienced such as this."

"Give yourself but fair play, Glencore, and you will surmount all your troubles. Come back into the world again—I don't mean this world of balls and dinner-parties, of morning calls and afternoons in the Park; but a really active, stirring life. Come with me to India, and let us have a raid amongst the jaguars; mix with the pleasant, light-hearted fellows you'll meet at every mess, who ask for nothing better than their own good spirits and good health, to content them with the world; just look out upon life, and see what numbers are struggling and swimming for existence, while you, at least, have competence and wealth for all you wish; and bear in mind that round the table where wit is flashing, and the merriest laughter rings, there is not a man—no, not one—who hasn't a something heavy in his

heart, but yet who'd feel himself a coward if his face confessed it."

"And why am I to put this mask upon me? for what and for whom have I to wear this disguise?" cried Glencore, angrily.

"For yourself! It is in bearing up manfully before the world you'll gain the courage to sustain your own heart. Ay, Glencore, you'll do it to-morrow. In the presence of royalty you'll comport yourself with dignity and reserve, and you'll come out from the interview higher and stronger in self-esteem."

"You talk as if I were some country squire who would stand abashed and awe-struck before his king; but remember, my worthy Colonel, I have lived a good deal inside the tabernacle, and its mysteries are no secrets to *me*."

"Reason the more for what I say!" broke in Harcourt; "your deference will not obliterate your judgment; your just respect will not alloy your reason."

"I'll talk to the king, sir, as I talk to you," said Glencore, passionately; "nor is

the visit of my seeking. I have long since done with courts and those who frequent them. What can royalty do for *me?* Upton and yourself may play the courtier, and fawn at levees; you have your petitions to present, your favours to beg for; you want to get this, or be excused from that; but I am no supplicant. I ask for no place—no ribbon. If the king speak to me about my private affairs, he shall be answered as I would answer any one who obtrudes his rank into the place that should only be occupied by friendship."

"It may be that he has some good counsel to offer."

"Counsel to offer me!" burst in Glencore, with increased warmth. "I would no more permit any man to give me advice unasked, than I would suffer him to go to my tradespeople and pay my debts for me. A man's private sorrows are as his debts—obligations between himself and his own heart. Don't tell me, sir, that even a king's prerogative absolves him from the duties of a gentleman."

While he uttered these words, he continued to fill and empty his wine-glass several times, as if passion had stimulated his thirst; and now his flashing eyes and his heightened colour betrayed the effect of wine.

"Let us stroll out into the cool air," said Harcourt. "See what a gorgeous night of stars it is."

"That you may resume your discourse on patience and resignation!" said Glencore, scoffingly. "No, sir. If I must listen to you, let me have at least the aid of the decanter. Your bitter maxims are a bad substitute for olives, but I must have wine to swallow them."

"I never meant them to be so distasteful to you," said Harcourt, good humouredly.

"Say, rather, you troubled your head little whether they were or not," replied Glencore, whose voice was now thick from passion and drink together. "You and Upton, and two or three others, presume to lecture *me*—who, because gifted, if you call it gifted—I'd say cursed—ay, sir, cursed with coarser natures—temperaments where

higher sentiments have no place—fellows that can make what they feel subordinate to what they want—you appreciate *that*, I hope—*that* stings you, does it? Well, sir, you'll find me as ready to act as to speak. There's not a word I utter here I mean to retract to-morrow."

"My dear Glencore, we have both taken too much wine."

"Speak for yourself, sir. If you desire to make the claret the excuse for your language, I can only say it's like everything else in your conduct—always a subterfuge—always a scapegoat. Oh, George, George, I never suspected this in you;" and burying his head between his hands, he burst into tears.

He never spoke a word as Harcourt assisted him to the carriage, nor did he open his lips on the road homewards.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE VILLA AT SORRENTO.

In one of the most sequestered nooks of Sorrento, almost escarped out of the rocky cliff, and half hid in the foliage of orange and oleander trees, stood the little villa of the Princess Sabloukoff. The blue sea washed the white marble terrace before the windows, and the arbutus, whose odour scented the drawing-room, dipped its red berries in the glassy water. The wildest and richest vegetation abounded on every side. Plants and shrubs of tropical climes mingled with the hardier races of northern lands; and the cedar and the plantain blended their leaves with the sycamore and the ilex; while, as if to complete the ad-

mixture, birds and beasts of remote countries were gathered together: and the bustard, the ape, and the antelope mixed with the peacock, the chamois, and the golden pheasant. The whole represented one of those capricious exhibitions by which wealth so often associates itself with the beautiful, and, despite all errors in taste, succeeds in making a spot eminently lovely. So was it. There was often light where a painter would have wished shadow. There were gorgeous flowers where a poet would have desired nothing beyond the blue heather-bell. There were startling effects of view, managed where chance glimpses through the trees had been infinitely more picturesque. There was, in fact, the obstrusive sense of riches in a thousand ways and places where mere unadorned nature had been far preferable; and yet, with all these faults, sea and sky, rock and foliage, the scented air, the silence, only broken by the tuneful birds, the rich profusion of colour upon a sward strewn with flowers, made of the spot a perfect paradise.

In a richly decorated room, whose three

windows opened on a marble terrace, sat the Princess. It was December; but the sky was cloudless, the sea a perfect mirror, and the light air that stirred the leaves soft and balmy as the breath of May. Her dress was in keeping with the splendour around her—a rich robe of yellow silk fastened up the front with large carbuncle buttons; sleeves of deep Valenciennes lace fell far over her jewelled fingers; and a scarf of golden embroidery, negligently thrown over an arm of her chair, gave what a painter would call the warm colour to a very striking picture. Further from the window, and carefully protected from the air by a screen, sat a gentleman whose fur-lined pelisse and velvet skull-cap showed that he placed more faith in the almanack than in the atmosphere. From his cork-soled boots to his shawl muffled about the throat, all proclaimed that distrust of the weather that characterises the invalid. No treachery of a hot sun—no seductions of that inveterate cheat, a fine day in winter—could inveigle Sir Horace Upton into any forgetfulness of his precau-

tions. He would have regarded such as a palpable weakness on his part,—a piece of folly perfectly unbecoming in a man of his diplomatic standing and ability.

He was writing, and smoking, and talking by turns, the table before him being littered with papers, and even the carpet at his feet strewn with the loose sheets of his composition. There was not in his air any of the concentration, or even seriousness, of a man engaged in an important labour; and yet the work before him employed all his faculties, and he gave to it the deepest attention of abilities of which very few possessed the equal. To great powers of reasoning and a very strong judgment he united a most acute knowledge of men; not exactly of mankind in the mass, but of that especial order with whom he had habitually to deal. Stolid, common-place stupidity might puzzle or embarrass him; while, for any amount of craft, for any degree of subtlety, he was an overmatch. The plain matter-of-fact intelligence occasionally gained a slight advantage over him at first; the trained and polished mind

of the most astute negotiator was a book he could read at sight. It was his especial tact to catch up all this knowledge at once,—very often in a first interview,—and thus, while others were interchanging the customary platitudes of every-day courtesy, he was gleaning and recording within himself the traits and characteristics of all around him.

"A clever fellow—very clever fellow, Cineselli," said he, as he continued to write. "His proposition is—certain commercial advantages, and that we, on our side, leave him alone to deal his own way with his own rabble. I see nothing against it, so long as they continue to be rabble; but grubs grow into butterflies, and very vulgar populace have now and then emerged into what are called liberal politicians."

"Only where you have the blessing of a free press," said the Princess, in a tone of insolent mockery.

"Quite true, Princess; a free press is a tonic, that with an increased dose becomes a stimulant, and occasionally over-excites."

"It makes your people drunk now and then!" said she, angrily.

"They always sleep it off over-night," said he, softly. "They very rarely pay even the penalty of the morning headache for the excess, which is exactly why it will not answer in warmer latitudes."

"Ours is a cold one, and I'm sure it would not suit us."

"I'm not so certain of that," said he, languidly. "I think it is eminently calculated for a people who don't know how to read."

She would have smiled at the remark, if the sarcasm had not offended her.

"Your lordship will therefore see," muttered he, reading to himself as he wrote, "that in yielding this point we are, while apparently making a concession, in reality obtaining a very considerable advantage——"

"Rather an English habit, I suspect," said she, smiling.

"Picked up in the course of our Baltic trade, Princess. In sending us your skins, you smuggled in some of your sentiments;

and Russian tallow has enlightened the nation in more ways than one!"

"You need it all, my dear chevalier," said she, with a saucy smile. "Harzewitch told me that your diplomatic people were inferior to those of the third-rate German States; that in fact they never had any 'information.'"

"I know what he calls 'information,' Princess; and his remark is just. Our Government is shockingly mean, and never would keep up a good system of spies."

"Spies; if you mean by an odious word to inculpate the honour of a high calling——"

"Pray forgive my interruption, but I am speaking in all good faith. When I said spy, it was in the bankrupt misery of a man who had nothing else to offer. I wanted to imply that pure but small stream which conveys intelligence from a fountain to a river it was not meant to feed. Wasn't that a carriage I heard in the 'cour?' Oh, pray don't open the window; there's an odious libeccio blowing to-day, and there's nothing so injurious to the nervous system."

"A cabinet messenger, your Excellency," said a servant, entering.

"What a bore! I hoped I was safe from a despatch for at least a month to come. I really believe they have no veneration for old institutions in England. They don't even celebrate Christmas!"

"I'm charmed at the prospect of a bag," cried the Princess.

"May I have the messenger shown in here, Princess?"

"Certainly; by all means."

"Happy to see your Excellency; hope your ladyship is in good health," said a smart-looking young fellow, who wore a much-frogged pelisse, and sported a very well-trimmed moustache.

"Ah, Stevins, how d'ye do?" said Upton. "You've had a cold journey over the Cenis."

"Came by the Splugen, your Excellency. I went round by Vienna, and Maurice Esterhazy took me as far as Milan."

The Princess stared with some astonishment. That the messenger should thus

familiarly style one of that great family was indeed matter of wonderment to her; nor, was it lessened as Upton whispered her, "Ask him to dine."

"And London, how is it? Very empty, Stevins?" continued he.

"A desert," was the answer.

"Where's Lord Adderley?"

"At Brighton. The King can't do without him, greatly to Adderley's disgust, for he is dying to have a week's shooting in the Highlands."

"And Cantworth, where is he?"

"He's off for Vienna, and a short trip to Hungary. I met him at dinner at the mess while waiting for the Dover packet. By the way, I saw a friend of your Excellency's—Harcourt."

"Not gone to India?"

"No. They've made him a governor or a commander-in-chief of something in the Mediterranean. I forget exactly where or what."

"You have brought me a mighty bag, Stevins," said Upton, sighing. "I had

hoped for a little ease and rest now that the House is up."

"They are all blue books, I believe," replied Stevins. "There's that blacking your Excellency wrote about, and the cricket-bats; the lathe must come out by the frigate, and the down mattress at the same time."

"Just do me the favour to open the bag, my dear Stevins. I am utterly without aid here," said Upton, sighing drearily; and the other proceeded to litter the table and the floor with a variety of strange and incongruous parcels.

"Report of factory commissioners," cried he, throwing down a weighty quarto. "Yarmouth bloaters—Atkinson's cerulean paste for the eyebrows—Worcester sauce—trade returns for Tahiti—a set of shoemaking tools—eight bottles of Darby's pyloric corrector—buffalo flesh-brushes, devilish hard they seem—Hume's speech on the reduction of foreign legations—novels from Bull's—top-boots for a tiger, and a mass of letters," said

Stevins, throwing them broadcast over the sofa.

"No despatches?" cried Upton, eagerly.

"Not one, by Jove!" said Stevins.

"Open one of those Darby's. I'll take a teaspoonful at once. Will you try it, Stevins?"

"Thanks, your Excellency, I never take physic."

"Well, you dine here, then," said he, with a sly look at the Princess.

"Not to-day, your Excellency. I dine with Grammont at eight."

"Then I'll not detain you. Come back here to-morrow about eleven or a little later. Come to breakfast if you like."

"At what hour?"

"I don't know—at any hour," sighed Upton, as he opened one of his letters and began to read; and Stevins bowed and withdrew, totally unnoticed and unrecognised as he slipped from the room.

One after another Upton threw down, after reading half a dozen lines, muttering

some indistinct syllables over the dreary stupidity of letter-writers in general. Occasionally he came upon some pressing appeal for money—some urgent request for even a small remittance by the next post, and these he only smiled at, while he refolded them with a studious care and neatness. "Why will you not help me with this chaos, dear Princess?" said he, at last.

"I am only waiting to be asked," said she; "but I feared that there might be secrets——"

"From you?" said he, with a voice of deep tenderness, while his eyes sparkled with an expression far more like raillery than affection. The Princess, however, had either not seen or not heeded it, for she was already deep in the correspondence.

"This is strictly private. Am I to read it?" said she.

"Of course," said he, bowing courteously.

And she read:

"Dear Upton,—Let us have a respite from tariffs and trade-talk for a month or

two, and tell me rather what the world is doing around you. We have never got the right end of that story about the Princess Celestine as yet. Who was he? Not Labinsky, I'll be sworn. The K—— insists it was Roseville, and I hope you may be able to assure me that he is mistaken. He is worse-tempered than ever. That Glencore business has exasperated him greatly. Couldn't your Princess—the world calls her yours"—["How good of the world, and how delicate of your friend!" said she, smiling superciliously. "Let us see who the writer is. Oh! a great man—the Lord Adderley," and went on with her reading:] —"couldn't your Princess find out something of real consequence to us about the Q——"

"What Queen does he mean," cried she, stopping.

"The Queen of Sheba, perhaps," said Upton, biting his lips with anger, while he made an attempt to take the letter from her.

"Pardon, this is interesting," said she,

and went on: "We shall want it soon; that is, if the manufacturing districts will not kindly afford us a diversion by some open-air demonstrations and a collision with the troops. We have offered them a most taking bait, by announcing wrongfully the departure of six regiments for India; thus leaving the large towns in the north apparently ungarrisoned. They are such poltroons that the chances are they'll not bite! You were right about Emerson. We have made his brother a Bishop, and he voted with us on the Arms Bill. Cole is a sterling patriot and an old Whig. He says nothing shall seduce him from his party, save a Lordship of the Admiralty. Corruption everywhere, my dear Upton, except on the Treasury benches!

"Holecroft insists on being sent to Petersburg, and having ascertained that the Emperor will not accept him, I have induced the K—— to nominate him to the post. Non culpa nostra, &c. He can scarcely vote against us after such an evidence of our good will. Find out what will give most umbrage

to your Court, and I'll tell you why in my next.

"Don't bother yourself about the Greeks. The time is not come yet, nor will it till it suit our policy to loosen the ties with Russia. As to France, there is not, nor will there be, in our time at least, any Government there. We must deal with them as with a public meeting, which may reverse to-morrow the resolutions they have adopted to-day. The French will never be formidable till they are unanimous. They'll never be unanimous till we declare war with them! Remember, I don't want anything serious with Cineselli. Irritate and worry as much as you can. Send even for a ship or two from Malta, but go no further. I want this for our radicals at home. Our own friends are in the secret. Write me a short despatch about our good relations with the Two Sicilies; and send me some news in a private letter. Let me have some ortolans in the bag, and believe me yours,

"ADDERLEY."

"There," said she, turning over a number of letters with a mere glance at their contents, "these are all trash—shooting and fox-hunting news, which one reads in the newspapers better, or at least more briefly narrated, with all that death and marriage intelligence which you English are so fond of parading before the world. But what is this literary gem here? Where did the paper come from? And that wonderful seal, and still more wonderful address?—'To his Worshipful Excellency the Truly Worthy and Right Honourable Sir Horace Upton, Plenipotentiary, Negotiator, and Extraordinary Diplomatist, living at Naples.'"

"What can it mean?" said he, languidly.

"You shall hear," said she, breaking the massive seal of green wax, which, to the size of a crown piece, ornamented one side of the epistle. "It is dated Schwats, Tyrol, and begins, 'Venerated and Reverend Excellency, when these unsymmetrically-designed, and not more ingeniously-conceived syllables——' Let us see his name," said she, stopping suddenly, and turning to the last

page, read, "'W. T., *vulgo*, Billy Traynor, a name cognate to your Worshipful Eminence in times past.'"

"To be sure, I remember him perfectly—a strange creature, that came out here with that boy you heard me speak of. Pray read on."

"I stopped at 'syllables.' Yes—when these curiously-conceived syllables, then, 'come under the visionary apertures of your acute understanding, they will disclose to your much-reflecting and nice-discriminating mind as cruel and murderous a deed as ever a miscreant imagination suggested to a diabolically-constructed and nefariously-fashioned organisation, showing that Nature, in her bland adaptiveness, never imposes a mistaken fruit on a genuine arborescence.'

"Do you understand him?" asked she.

"Partly, perhaps," continued he. "Let us have the subject."

"'Not to weary your exalted and never-enough-to-be-esteemed intelligence, I will proceed without further ambiguities or circumgyratory evolutions, to the main body of

my allegation. It happened in this way: Charley — your venerated worship knows who I mean—Charley, ever deep in marmorial pursuits, and far progressed in sculptorial excellence, with a genius that Phidias, if he did not envy, would esteem——'

"Really I cannot go on with these interminable parentheses," said she. "You must decipher them yourself."

Upton took the letter, and read it, at first hastily, and then recommencing, with more of care and attention, occasionally stopping to reflect and consider the details. "This is likely to be a troublesome business," said he. "This boy has got himself into a serious scrape. Love and a duel are bad enough; but an Austrian state-prison, and a sentence of twenty years in irons, are even worse. So far as I can make out from my not over lucid correspondent, he had conceived a violent affection for a young lady at Massa, to whose favour a young Austrian of high rank at the same time pretended."

"Wahnsdorf, I'm certain," broke in the

Princess; "and the girl—that Mademoiselle——"

"Harley," interposed Sir Horace.

"Just so—Harley. Pray go on," said she, eagerly.

"A very serious altercation and a duel were the consequences of this rivalry, and Wahnsdorf has been dangerously wounded; his life is still in peril. The Harleys have been sent out of the country, and my unlucky protégé, handed over to the Austrians, has been tried, condemned, and sentenced to twenty years in Kuffstein, a Tyrol fortress where great severity is practised; from the neighbourhood of which this letter is written, entreating my speedy interference and protection."

"What can you do? It is not even within your jurisdiction," said she, carelessly.

"True; nor was the capture by the Austrians within theirs, Princess. It is a case where assuredly everybody was in the wrong, and, therefore, admirably adapted for nice negotiation."

"Who and what is the youth?"

"I have called him a protégé."

"Has he no more tender claim to the affectionate solicitude of Sir Horace Upton?" said she, with an easy air of sarcasm.

"None, on my honour," said he, eagerly. "None at least of the kind you infer. His is a very sad story, which I'll tell you about at another time. For the present, I may say that he is English, and as such must be protected by the English authorities. The Government of Massa have clearly committed a great fault in handing him over to the Austrians. Stubber must be 'brought to book' for this in the first instance. By this we shall obtain a perfect insight into the whole affair."

"The Imperial family will never forgive an insult offered to one of their own blood," said the Princess, haughtily.

"We shall not ask them to forgive anything, my dear Princess. We shall only prevent their natural feelings betraying them into an act of injustice. The boy's

offence, whatever it was, occurred outside the frontier, as I apprehend."

"How delighted you English are when you can convert an individual case into an international question. You would at any moment sacrifice an ancient alliance to the trumpery claim of an aggrieved tourist!" said she, rising angrily, and swept out of the room ere Sir Horace could arise to open the door for her.

Upton walked slowly to the chimney and rang the bell. "I shall want the calèche and post-horses at eight o'clock, Antoine. Put up some things for me, and get all my furs ready." And with this he measured forty drops from a small phial he carried in his waistcoat-pocket, and sat down to pare his nails with a very diminutive penknife.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A DIPLOMATIST'S DINNER.

WERE we writing a drama instead of a true history, we might like to linger for a few moments on the leave-taking between the Princess and Sir Horace Upton. They were, indeed, both consummate "artists," and they played their parts to perfection—not as we see high comedy performed on the stage, by those who grotesque its refinements and exaggerate its dignity; "lashing to storm" the calm and placid lake, all whose convulsive throes are many a fathom deep, and whose wildest workings never bring a ripple to the surface. No, theirs was the true version of well-bred "performance." A little well-affected grief at separation, brief as

it was meant to be—a little half-expressed surprise, on the lady's part, at the suddenness of the departure—a little, just as vaguely conveyed, complaint on the other side, over the severe requirements of duty, and a very little tenderness—for there was no one to witness it—at the thought of parting; and with a kiss upon her hand, whose respectful courtesy no knight-errant of old could have surpassed, Sir Horace backed from the "presence," sighed, and slipped away.

Had our reader been a spectator instead of a peruser of the events we have lately detailed, he might have fancied, from certain small asperities of manner, certain quicknesses of reproof and readiness at rejoinder, that here were two people only waiting for a reasonable and decent pretext to go on their separate roads in life. Yet nothing of this kind was the case; the bond between them was not affection—it was simply convenience. Their partnership gave them a strength and a social solvency which would have been sorely damaged had either retired from "the firm;" and they knew it.

What would the Princess's dinners have been without the polished ease of him who felt himself half the host? What would all Sir Horace Upton's subtlety avail him, if it were not that he had sources of information which always laid open the game of his adversaries? Singly, each would have had a tough struggle with the world—together, they were more than a match for it.

The highest order of diplomatist, in the estimation of Upton, was the man who, at once, knew what was *possible* to be done. It was his own peculiar quality to possess this gift; but great as his natural acuteness was, it would not have availed him, without those secret springs of intelligence we have alluded to. There is no saying to what limit he might not have carried this faculty, had it not been that one deteriorating and detracting feature marred and disfigured the fairest form of his mind.

He could not, do all that he would, disabuse himself of a very low estimate of men and their motives. He did not slide into this philosophy, as certain indolent people

do, just to save them the trouble of discriminating—he did not acquire it by the hard teachings of adversity. No; it came upon him slowly and gradually, the fruit, as he believed, of calm judgment and much reflection upon life. As little did he accept it willingly; he even laboured against the conviction; but, strive as he might, there it was, and there it would remain.

His fixed impression was, that in every circumstance and event in life there was always a "dessous des cartes"—a deeper game concealed beneath the surface—and that it was a mere question of skill and address how much of this penetrated through men's actions. If this theory unravelled many a tangled web of knavery to him, it also served to embarrass and confuse him in situations where inferior minds had never recognised a difficulty! How much ingenuity did he expend to detect what had no existence! How wearily did he try for soundings where there was no bottom!

Through the means of the Princess he had learned—what some very wise heads do not

yet like to acknowledge—that the feeling of the despotic governments towards England was very different from what it had been at the close of the great war with Napoleon. They had grown more dominant and exacting, just as we were becoming every hour more democratic. To maintain our old relations with them, therefore, on the old footing, would be only to involve ourselves in continual difficulty, with a certainty of final failure; and the only policy that remained was to encourage the growth of liberal opinions on the Continent, out of which new alliances might be formed, to recompense us for the loss of the old ones. There is a story told of a certain benevolent prince, whose resources were unhappily not commensurate with his good intentions, and whose ragged retinue wearied him with entreaties for assistance. "Be of good cheer," said he, one day, "I have ordered a field of flax to be sown, and you shall all of you have new shirts." Such were pretty much the position and policy of England. Out of our crop of Constitutionalism we

speculated on a rich harvest, to be afterwards manufactured for our use and benefit. We leave it to deeper heads to say if the result has been all that we calculated on, and, asking pardon for such digression, we join Sir Horace once more.

When Sir Horace Upton ordered post-horses to his carriage, he no more knew where he was going, nor where he would halt, than he could have anticipated what course any conversation might take when once started. He had, to be sure, a certain ideal goal to be reached; but he was one of those men who like to think that the casual interruptions one meets with in life are less obstruction than opportunity; so that, instead of deeming these subjects for regret or impatience, he often accepted them as indications that there was some profit to be derived from them—a kind of fatalism more common than is generally believed. When he set out from Sorrento it was with the intention of going direct to Massa; not that this state lay within the limits his functions ascribed to him—that being probably the

very fact which imparted a zest to the journey. Any other man would have addressed himself to his colleague in Tuscany, or wherever it might be; while he, being Sir Horace Upton, took the whole business upon himself in his own way. Young Massy's case opened to his eyes a great question, viz., what was the position the Austrians assumed to take in Italy? For any care about the youth, or any sympathy with his sufferings, he distressed himself little; not that he was, in any respect, heartless or unfeeling, it was simply that greater interests were before him. Here was one of those "grand issues" that he felt worthy of his abilities—it was a cause where he was proud to hold a brief.

Resolving all his plans of action methodically, yet rapidly; arranging every detail in his own mind, even to the use of certain expressions he was to employ; he arrived at the palace of the embassy, where he desired to halt to take up his letters and make a few preparations before his de-

parture. His Maestro di Casa, Signor Franchetti, was in waiting for his arrival, and respectfully assured him "that all was in readiness, and that his Excellency would be perfectly satisfied. We had, it is true," continued he, "a difficulty about the fish, but I sent off an express to Baia, and we have secured a sturgeon."

"What are you raving about, Caro Pipo?" said the Minister; "what is all this long story of Baia and the fish?"

"Has your Excellency forgotten that we have a grand dinner to-day, at eight o'clock; that the Prince Maximilian of Bavaria and all the foreign ambassadors are invited?"

"Is this Saturday, Pipo?" said Sir Horace, blandly.

"Yes, your Excellency."

"Send Mr. Brockett to me," said Sir Horace, as he slowly mounted the stairs to his own apartment.

Sir Horace was stretched on a sofa, in all the easy luxury of magnificent dressing-gown and slippers, when Mr. Brockett entered;

and without any preliminary of greeting he said, with a quiet laugh, "You have let me forget all about the dinner to-day, Brockett!"

"I thought you knew it; you took great trouble about the persons to be asked, and you canvassed whether the Duc de Borodino, being only a Chargé d'Affaires——"

"There, there; don't you see the—the inappropriateness of what you are doing—even in England a man is not asked to criminate himself. How many are coming?"

"Nineteen; the 'Nonce' is ill, and has sent an apology."

"Then the party can be eighteen, Brockett; you must tell them that I'm ill, too ill to come to dinner. I know the Prince Max very well; he'll not take it badly, and as to Cineselli, we shall see what humour he is in!"

"But they'll know that you arrived here this afternoon; they'll naturally suppose——"

"They'll naturally suppose—if people ever do anything so intensely stupid as naturally to suppose anything—that I am the best

judge of my own health; and so, Mr. Brockett, you may as well con over the terms by which you may best acquaint the company with the reasons for my absence; and if the Prince proposes a visit to me in the evening, let him come; he'll find me here, in my own room. Would you do me the kindness to let Antinori fetch his cupping glasses, and tell Franchetti also that I'll take my chicken grilled, not roasted. I'll look over the treaty in the evening. One mushroom, only one, he may give me, and the Carlsbad water, at 28 degrees. I'm very troublesome, Brockett, but I'm sure you'll excuse it; thanks, thanks"—and he pressed the Secretary's hand, and gave him a smile, whose blandishment had often done good service, and would do so again!

To almost any other man in the world this interruption to his journey—this sudden tidings of a formally-arranged dinner, which he could not or would not attend—would have proved a source of chagrin and dissatisfaction. Not so with Upton; he liked a

"contrariety." Whatever stirred the still waters of life, even though it should be a head wind, was far more grateful than a calm! He laughed to himself at the various comments his company were sure to pass over his conduct; he pictured to his mind the anger of some and the astonishment of others, and revelled in the thought of the courtier-like indignation such treatment of a Royal Highness was certain to elicit.

"But who can answer for his health?" said he, with an easy laugh to himself. "Who can promise what he may be ten days hence?" The appearance of his dinner—if one may dignify by such a name the half of a chicken, flanked by a roasted apple and a biscuit—cut short his lucubrations; and Sir Horace ate and sipped his Carlsbad with as much enjoyment as many another man has felt over venison and Chambertin.

"Are they arrived, Pipo?" said he, as his servant removed the dessert of two figs and a lime.

"Yes, your Excellency, they are at table."

"How many are there?"

"Seventeen, sir, and Mr. Brockett."

"Did the Prince seem to—to feel my absence, Pipo?"

"I thought he appeared very sorry for your Excellency, when Mr. Brockett spoke to him, and he whispered something to the aide-de-camp beside him."

"And the others; how did they take it?"

"Count Tarrocco said he'd retire, sir; that he could not dine where the host was too ill to receive him; but the Duc de Campo Stretto said it was impossible they could leave the room while a 'Royal Highness' continued to remain in it; and they all agreed with him."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Upton, in a low tone. "I hope the dinner is a good one?"

"It is exquisite, sir; the Prince ate some of the caviare soup, and was asking a second time for the 'pain des ortolans' when I left the room."

"And the wine, Pipo? have you given them that rare 'La Rose?'"

"Yes, your Excellency, and the 'Klausthaller cabinet;' his Royal Highness asked for it."

"Go back, then, now. I want for nothing more; only drop in here by-and-by, and tell me how all goes on. Just light that pastile before you go; there—that will do."

And once more his Excellency was left to himself. In that vast palace—the once home of a royal prince—no sounds of the distant revelry could reach the remote quarter where he sat, and all was silent and still around him, and Upton was free to ruminate and reflect at ease. There was a sense of haughty triumph in thinking that beneath his roof, at that very moment, were assembled the great representatives of almost every important state of Europe, to whom he had not deigned to accord the honour of his presence; but though this thought did flit across his mind, far more was he intent on reflecting what might be the consequences—good or evil—of the incident. "And then," said he, aloud, "how will Printing-house-square treat us?

What a fulminating leader shall we not have, denouncing either our insolence or our incompetence, ending with the words: 'If, then, Sir Horace Upton be not incapacitated from illness for the discharge of his high functions, it is full time for his Government to withdraw him from a sphere where his caprice and impertinence have rendered him something worse than useless;' and then will come a flood of petty corroborations—the tourist tribe who heard of us at Berlin, or called upon us at the Hague, and whose unreturned cards and uninvited wives are counts in the long indictment against us. What a sure road to private friendships is diplomacy! How certain is one of conciliating the world's good opinion by belonging to it! I wish I had followed the law, or medicine," muttered he; "they are both abstruse, both interesting; or been a gardener, or a shipwright, or a mathematical instrument maker, or——" Whatever the next choice might have been we know not, for he dropped off asleep.

From that pleasant slumber, and a dream

of Heaven knows what life of Arcadian simplicity, of rippling streams, and soft-eyed shepherdesses, he was destined to be somewhat suddenly, if not rudely aroused, as Franchetti introduced a stranger who would accept no denial.

"Your people were not for letting me up, Upton," cried a rich, mellow voice, and Harcourt stood before him, bronzed and weather-beaten, as he came off his journey.

"You, George? Is it possible!" exclaimed Sir Horace; "what best of all lucky winds has driven you here? I'm not sure I wasn't dreaming of you this very moment. I know I have had a vision of angelic innocence and simplicity, which you must have had your part in; but do tell me when did you arrive, and whence——"

"Not till I have dined, by Jove! I have tasted nothing since daybreak, and then it was only a mere apology for a breakfast."

"Franchetti, get something, will you?" said Upton, languidly; "a cutlet, a fowl, anything that can be had at once."

"Nothing of the kind, Signor Franchetti," interposed Harcourt; "if I have a wolf's appetite, I have a man's patience. Let me have a real dinner, soup, fish, an entrée—two if you like—roast beef, and I leave the wind-up to your own discretion, only premising that I like game, and have a weakness for woodcocks. By the way, does this climate suit Bordeaux, Upton?"

"They tell me so, and mine has a good reputation."

"Then claret be it, and no other wine. Don't I make myself at home, old fellow, eh?" said he, clapping Upton on the shoulder. "Have I not taken his Majesty's Embassy by storm, eh?"

"We surrender at discretion, only too glad to receive our vanquisher. Well, and how do you find me looking? Be candid: how do I seem to your eyes?"

"Pretty much as I have seen you these last fifteen years—not an hour older, at all events. That same delicacy of constitution is a confounded deal better than most men's

strong health, for it never wears out; but I have always said it, Upton will see us all down!"

Sir Horace sighed as though this were too pleasant to be true.

"Well," said he, at last, "but you have not told me what good chance has brought you here. Is it the first post-station on the way to India?"

"No; they've taken me off the saddle, and given me a staff appointment at Corfu. I'm going out second in command there, and whether it was to prevent my teazing them for something else, or that there was really some urgency in the matter, they ordered me off at once."

"Are they reinforcing the garrison there?" asked Upton.

"No; not so far as I have heard."

"It were better policy to do so, than to send out a 'commander-in-chief and a drummer of great experience,'" muttered Upton to himself; but Harcourt could not catch the remark. "Have you any news stirring in

England? What do the clubs talk about?" asked Sir Horace.

"Glencore's business occupied them for the last week or so; now, I think, it is yourself furnishes the chief topic for speculation."

"What of me?" asked Upton, eagerly.

"Why, the rumour goes that you are to have the Foreign Office; Adderley, they say, goes out, and Conway and yourself are the favourites, the odds being slightly on his side."

"This is all news to me, George," said Upton, with a degree of animation that had nothing fictitious about it. "I have had a note from Adderley in the last bag, and there's not a word about these changes."

"Possibly; but perhaps my news is later. What I allude to is said to have occurred the day I started."

"Ah, very true; and now I remember that the messenger came round by Vienna, sent there by Adderley, doubtless," muttered he, "to consult Conway before seeing *me*, and, I have little doubt, with a letter for *me* in the event of Conway declining."

"Well, have you hit upon the solution of it?" said Harcourt, who had not followed him through his half-uttered observation.

"Perhaps so," said Upton, slowly, while he leaned his head upon his hand, and fell into a fit of meditation. Meanwhile, Harcourt's dinner made its appearance, and the Colonel seated himself at the table with a traveller's appetite.

"Whenever any one has called you a selfish fellow, Upton," said he, as he helped himself twice from the same dish, "I have always denied it, and on this good ground, that, had you been so, you had never kept the best cook in Europe, while unable to enjoy his talents. What a rare artist must this be—what's his name?"

"Pipo, how is he called?" said Upton, languidly.

"Monsieur Carmael, your Excellency."

"Ah, to be sure; a person of excellent family. I've been told he's from Provençe," said Upton, in the same weary voice.

"I could have sworn to his birthplace,"

cried Harcourt; "no man can manage cheese and olives in cookery but a Provençal. Ah! what a glass of Bordeaux! To your good health, Upton, and to the day that you may be able to enjoy this as I do," said he, as he tossed off a bumper.

"It does me good even to witness the pleasure it yields," said Upton, blandly.

"By Jove! then, I'll be worth a whole course of tonics to you, for I most thoroughly appreciate all the good things you have given me. By the way, how are you off for dinner company here—any pleasant people?"

"I have no health for pleasant people, my dear Harcourt; like horse exercise, they only agree with you when you are strong enough not to require them."

"Then what have you got?" asked the Colonel, somewhat abashed.

"Princes, generals, envoys, and heads of departments."

"Good Heavens! legions of honour and golden fleeces!"

"Just so," said Upton, smiling at the dis-

may in the other's countenance; "I've had such a party as you describe to-day. Are they gone yet, Franchetti?"

"They're at coffee, your Excellency, but the Prince has ordered his carriage."

"And you did not go near them?" asked Harcourt, in amazement.

"No; I was poorly, as you see me," said Upton, smiling. "Pipo tells me, however, that the dinner was a good one, and I am sure they pardon my absence."

"Foreign ease, I've no doubt; though I can't say I like it," muttered Harcourt. "At all events, it is not for *me* to complain, since the accident has given me the pleasure of your society."

"You are about the only man I could have admitted," said Upton, with a certain graciousness of look and manner that, perhaps, detracted a little from its sincerity.

Fortunately, not so to Harcourt's eyes, for he accepted the speech in all honesty and good faith, as he said, "Thank you, heartily, my boy. The welcome is better even than the dinner, and that is saying a good deal.

No more wine, thank you; I'm going to have a cigar, and with your leave I'll ask for some brandy-and-water."

This was addressed to Franchetti, who speedily reappeared with a liqueur-stand and an ebony cigar-case.

"Try these, George; they're better than your own," said Upton, drily.

"That I will," cried Harcourt, laughing; "I'm determined to draw all my resources from the country in occupation, especially as they are superior to what I can obtain from home. This same career of yours, Upton, strikes me as rather a good thing. You have all these things duty free."

"Yes, we have that privilege," said Upton, sighing.

"And the privilege of drawing some few thousand pounds per annum, paid messengers to and from England, secret service money, and the rest of it, eh?"

Upton smiled, and sighed again.

"And what do you do for all that—I mean what are you expected to do?"

"Keep your party in when they are in—

disconcert the enemy when your friends are out."

"And is that always a safe game?" asked Harcourt, eagerly.

"Not when played by unskilful players, my dear George. They occasionally make sad work, and get bowled out themselves for their pains; but there's no great harm in that neither."

"How do you mean there's no harm in it?"

"Simply, that if a man can't keep his saddle he oughtn't to try to ride foremost; but these speculations will only puzzle you, my dear Harcourt.—What of Glencore? You said awhile ago that the town was talking of him—how and wherefore was it?"

"Haven't you heard the story, then?"

"Not a word of it."

"Well, I'm a bad narrator; besides, I don't know where to begin; and even if I did, I have nothing to tell but the odds and ends of club gossip, for I conclude nobody knows all the facts but the King himself."

"If I were given to impatience, George,

you would be a most consummate plague to me," said Upton; "but I'm not. Go on, however, in your own blundering way, and leave me to glean what I can *in mine*."

Cheered and encouraged by this flattering speech, Harcourt did begin; but, more courteous to him than Sir Horace, we mean to accord him a new chapter for his revelations; premising the while to our reader that the Colonel, like the knife-grinder, had really "no story to tell."

CHAPTER XIX.

A VERY BROKEN NARRATIVE.

"You want to hear all about Glencore?" said Harcourt, as, seated in the easiest of attitudes in an easy-chair, he puffed his cigar luxuriously; "and when I have told you all I know, the chances are you'll be little the wiser." Upton smiled a bland assent to this exordium, but in such a way as to make Harcourt feel less at ease than before.

"I mean," said the Colonel, "that I have little to offer you beyond the guesses and surmises of club talk. It will be for your own intelligence to penetrate through the obscurity afterwards. You understand me?"

"I believe I undesrtand you," said Upton,

slowly, and with the same quiet smile. Now this cold, semi-sarcastic manner of Upton was the one sole thing in the world which the honest Colonel could not stand up against; he always felt as though it were the prelude to something cutting or offensive —some sly impertinence that he could not detect till too late to resent—some insinuation that might give the point to a whole conversation, and yet be undiscovered by him till the day following. Little as Harcourt was given to wronging his neighbour, he, in this instance, was palpably unjust; Upton's manner being nothing more than the impress made upon a very subtle man by qualities very unlike any of his own, and which in their newness amused him. The very look of satire was as often an expression of sorrow and regret, that he could not be as susceptible—as easy of deception—as those about him. Let us pardon our worthy Colonel if he did not comprehend this; shrewder heads than his own had made the

same mistake. Half to resent this covert slyness, half to arouse himself to any conflict before him, he said, in a tone of determination, "It is only fair to tell you that you are yourself to blame for anything that may have befallen poor Glencore."

"I to blame! Why, my dear Harcourt, you are surely dreaming."

"As wide awake as ever I was. If it had not been for a blunder of yours—an unpardonable blunder, seeing what has come of it—sending a pack of trash to me about salt and sulphur, while you forwarded a private letter about Glencore to the Foreign Office, all this might not have happened."

"I remember that it was a most disagreeable mistake. I have paid heavily for it, too. That lotion for the cervical vertebræ has come back all torn, and we cannot make out whether it be a phosphate or a prot'-oxide of bismuth. You don't happen to remember?"

"I?—of course I know nothing about it.

I'd as soon have taken a porcupine for a pillow as I'd have adventured on the confounded mixture. But, as I was saying, that blessed letter, written by some Princess or other, as I understand, fell into the King's hands, and the consequence was, that he sent off immediately to Glencore an order to go down to him at Brighton. Naturally enough, I thought he'd not go; he had the good and sufficient pretext of his bad health to excuse him. Nobody had seen him abroad in the world for years back, and it was easy enough to say that he could not bear the journey. Nothing of the kind; he received the command as willingly as he might have done an invitation to dinner fifteen years ago, and talked of nothing else for the whole evening after but of his old days and nights in Carlton House; how gracious the Prince used to be to him formerly; how constantly he was a guest at his table; what a brilliant society it was; how full of wit and the rest of it, till, by Jove! what between

drinking more wine than he was accustomed to take, and the excitement of his own talking, he became quite wild and unmanageable; he was not drunk, nor anything like it, it was rather the state of a man whose mind had got some sudden shock; for, in the midst of perfectly rational conversation, he would fall into paroxysms of violent passion, inveighing against every one, and declaring that he never had possessed one true-hearted, honest friend in his life.

"It was not without great difficulty that I got him back to my lodgings, for we had gone to dine at Richmond. Then we put him to bed, and I sent for Hunter, who came on the instant. Though by this time Glencore was much more calm and composed, Hunter called the case brain fever; had his hair cut quite close, and ice applied to the head. Without any knowledge of his history or even of his name, Hunter pronounced him to be a man whose intellect had received some terrible shock, and that the pre-

sent was simply an acute attack of a long-existent malady."

"Did he use any irritants?" asked Upton, anxiously.

"No; he advised nothing but the cold during the night."

"Ah! what a mistake," sighed Upton, heavily. "It was precisely the case for the cervical lotion I was speaking of. Of course he was much worse next morning?"

"That he was; not as regarded his reason, however, for he could talk collectedly enough, but he was irritable and passionate to a degree scarcely credible; would not endure the slightest opposition, and so suspectful of everything and everybody, that if he overheard a whisper it threw him into a convulsion of anger. Hunter's opinion was evidently a gloomy one, and he said to me as we went down stairs, 'He may come through it with life, but scarcely with a sound intellect.' This was a heavy blow to *me*, for I could not entirely acquit myself of

the fault of having counselled this visit to Brighton, which I now perceived had made such a deep impression upon him. I roused myself, however, to meet the emergency, and walked down to St. James's to obtain some means of letting the King know that Glencore was too ill to keep his appointment. Fortunately, I met Knighton, who was just setting off to Brighton, and who promised to take charge of the commission. I then strolled over to Brookes's to see the morning papers, and lounged till about four o'clock, when I turned homeward.

"Gloomy and sad I was, as I reached my door, and rang the bell with a cautious hand. They did not hear the summons, and I was forced to ring again, when the door was opened by my servant, who stood pale and trembling before me. 'He's gone, sir—he's gone,' cried he, almost sobbing.

"'Good Heaven,' cried I. 'Dead!'

"'No, sir, gone away—driven off, no one knows where. I had just gone out to the

chemist's, and was obliged to call round at Doctor Hunter's about a word in the prescription they couldn't read, and when I came back he was away.'

"I then ascertained that the carriage which had been ordered the day before at a particular hour, and which we had forgotten to countermand, had arrived during my servant's absence. Glencore hearing it stop at the door, inquired whose it was, and as suddenly springing out of bed, proceeded to dress himself, which he did, in the suit he had ordered to wait on the King. So apparently reasonable was he in all he said, and such an air of purpose did he assume, that the nurse-tender averred she could not dare to interpose, believing that his attack might possibly be some sort of passing access that he was accustomed to, and knew best how to deal with.

"I did not lose a moment, but, ordering post-horses, pursued him with all speed. On reaching Croydon, I heard he had passed

about two hours before; but though I did my best, it was in vain. I arrived at Brighton late at night, only to learn that a gentleman had got out at the Pavilion, and had not left it since.

"I do not believe that all I have ever suffered in my life equalled what I went through in the two weary hours that I passed walking up and down outside that low paling that skirts the Palace garden. The poor fellow, in all his misery, came before me in so many shapes; sometimes wandering in intellect—sometimes awake and conscious of his sufferings—now, trying to comport himself as became the presence he was in—now, reckless of all the world and everything. What could have happened to detain him so long?—what had been the course of events since he passed that threshold? were questions that again and again crossed me.

"I tried to make my way in—I know not exactly what I meant to do afterwards—but

the sentries refused me admittance. I thought of scaling the enclosure, and reaching the Palace through the garden, but the police kept strict watch on every side. At last, it was nigh twelve o'clock, that I heard a sentry challenge some one, and shortly after a figure passed out and walked towards the pier. I followed, determined to make inquiry, no matter of whom. He walked so rapidly, however, that I was forced to run to overtake him. This attracted his notice; he turned hastily, and by the straggling moonlight I recognised Glencore.

"He stood for a moment still, and beckoning me towards him, he took my arm in silence, and we walked onward in the direction of the sea-shore. It was now a wild and gusty night. The clouds drifted fast, shutting out the moon at intervals, and the sea broke harshly along the strand.

"I cannot tell you the rush of strange and painful emotions which came upon me as I thus walked along, while not a word passed

between us. As for myself, I felt that the slightest word from me might, perhaps, change the whole current of his thoughts, and thus destroy my only chance of any clue to what was passing within him. 'Are you cold?' said he, at length, feeling possibly a slight tremor in my arm. 'Not cold, exactly,' said I, 'but the night is fresh, and I half suspect too fresh for *you*.' 'Feel that,' said he, placing his hand in mine, and it was burning. 'The breeze that comes off the sea is grateful to me, for I am like one on fire.' 'Then I am certain, my dear Glencore,' said I, 'that this is a great imprudence. Let us turn back towards the inn.'

"He made no reply, but with a rough motion of his arm moved forward as before. 'Three hours and more,' said he, with a full and stern utterance, 'they kept me waiting. There were Ministers with the King. There was some foreign envoy, too, to be presented, and if I had not gone in alone and unannounced, I might still be in the ante-

chamber. How he stared at me, Harcourt, and my close-cropt hair. It was *that* seemed first to strike him, as he said, "Have you had an illness lately?" He looked poorly, too, bloated and pale, and like one who fretted, and I told him so. "We are both changed, sir," said I—"sadly changed since we met last. We might almost begin to hope that another change is not far off,—the last and the best one." I don't remember what he answered. It was, I think, something about who came along with me from town, and who was with me at Brighton—I forget exactly, but I know that he sent for Knighton, and made him feel my pulse. "You'll find it rapid enough, I've no doubt, Sir William," said I. "I rose from a sick bed to come here; his Majesty had deigned to wish to see me." Then the King stopped me, and made a sign to Knighton to withdraw.

"'Wasn't it a strange situation, Harcourt, to be seated there beside the King, alone? None other present—all to ourselves—talk-

ing as you and I might talk of what interested us most of all the world—and *he* showing me that letter, the letter that ought to have come to *me*. How he could do it I know not. Neither you nor I, George, could have done so; for, after all, she was, ay, and she *is*, his wife. He could not avail himself of *my* stratagem. I said so, too, and he answered, "Ay, but I can divorce her if one half of that be true;" and he pointed to the letter. "The Lady Glencore," said he, "must know everything, and be willing to tell it, too. She has paid the heaviest penalty ever woman paid for another. Read that,"—and I read it—ay, I read it four times, five times over—and then my brain began to burn, and a thousand fancies flitted across me, and though he talked on, I heard not a word.

"'"But that lady is my wife, sir," broke I in; "and what a part do you assign her! She is to be a spy, a witness, perhaps, in some infamous cause. How shall I, a Peer

of the realm, endure to see my name thus degraded? Is it Court favour can recompense me for lost or tarnished honour?" "But it will be her own vindication," said he. Her own vindication—these were the words, George,—*she* should be clear of all reproach. By Heaven, he said so, that I might declare it before the world—and then it should be proved!—be proved! How base a man can be, even though he wear a crown! Just fancy his proposition; but I spurned it, and said, "You must seek for some one with a longer chance of life, sir, to do this; my days are too brief for such dishonour;" and he was angry with me, and said I had forgotten the presence in which I stood. It was true, I had forgotten it.

"'He called me a wretched fool, too, as I tore up that letter. That was wrong in me, Harcourt, was it not? I did not see him go, but I found myself alone in the room, and I was picking up the fragments of the letter as they entered. They were less than

courteous to me, though I told them who I was—an ancient barony better than half the modern marquisates. I gave them date and place for a creation that smacked of other services than theirs. Knighton would come with me, but I shook him off. Your Court physician can carry his complaisance even to poison. By George! it is their chief office, and I know well what snares are now in store for me.'

"And thence he went on to say that he would hasten back to his Irish solitude, where none could trace him out. That there his life, at least, would be secure, and no emissaries of the King dare follow him. It was in vain I tried to induce him to return, even for one night, to the hotel, and I saw that to persist in my endeavours would be to hazard the little influence I still possessed over him. I could not, however, leave the poor fellow to his fate without at least the assurance of a home somewhere, and so I accompanied him to Ireland, and left him in

that strange old ruin where we once sojourned together. His mind had gradually calmed down, but a deep melancholy had gained entire possession of him, and he passed whole days without a word. I saw that he often laboured to recal some of the events of the interview with the King, but his memory had not retained them, and he seemed like one eternally engaged in some problem which his faculties could not solve.

"When I left him and arrived in town, I found the clubs full of the incident, but evidently without any real knowledge of what had occurred; since the version was, that Glencore had asked an audience of the King, and gone down to the Pavilion to read to his Majesty a most atrocious narrative of the Queen's life in Italy, offering to substantiate — through his Italian connexion — every allegation it contained—a proposal that, of course, was only received by the King in the light of an insult; and that this reception, so different from all his expecta-

tions, had turned his head and driven him completely insane!

"I believe now I have told you everything as I heard it; indeed, I have given you Glencore's own words, since, without them, I could not convey to you what he intended to say. The whole affair is a puzzle to me, for I am unable to tell where the poor fellow's brain was wandering, and when he spoke under the guidance of right reason. You, of course, have the clue to it all."

"I! How so?" cried Upton.

"You have seen the letter which caused all the trouble; you know its contents, and what it treats of."

"Very true; I must have read it; but I have not the slightest recollection of what it was about. There was something, I know, about Glencore's boy—he was called Greppi, though, and might not have been recognised; and there was some gossip about the Princess of Wales—the Queen, as they call her now

—and her ladies; but I must frankly confess it did not interest me, and I have forgotten it all."

"Is the writer of the letter to be come at?"

"Nothing easier. I'll take you over to breakfast with her to-morrow morning; you shall catechise her yourself."

"Oh! she is then——"

"She is the Princess Sabloukoff, my dear George, and a very charming person, as you will be the first to acknowledge. But as to this interview at Brighton, I fancy—even from the disjointed narrative of Glencore—one can make a guess of what it portended. The King saw that my Lady Glencore—for so we must call her—knew some very important facts about the Queen, and wished to obtain them; and saw, too, that certain scandals, as the phrase goes, which attached to her ladyship, lay at another door. He fancied, not unreasonably, perhaps, that

Glencore would be glad to hear this exculpation of his wife; and he calculated that by the boon of this intelligence, he could gain over Glencore to assist him in his project for a divorce. Don't you perceive, Harcourt, of what an inestimable value it would prove, to possess one single gentleman, one man or one woman of station, amid all this rabble that they are summoning throughout the world to bring shame upon England?"

"Then you incline to believe Lady Glencore blameless?" asked Harcourt, anxiously.

"I think well of every one, my charming Colonel. It is the only true philosophy in life. Be as severe as you please on all who injure yourself, but always be lenient to the faults that only damage your friends. You have no idea how much practical wisdom the maxim contains, nor what a fund of charity it provides."

"I'm ashamed to be so stupid; but I must come back to my old question. Is all

this story against Glencore's wife only a calumny?"

"And I must fall back upon my old remark, that all the rogues in the world are in gaol; the people you see walking about and at large are unexceptionably honest—every man of them. Ah, my dear deputy-assistant, adjutant, or commissary, or whatever it be, can you not perceive the more than folly of these perquisitions into character? You don't require that the ice should be strong enough to sustain a twenty-four-pounder before you venture to put foot on it; enough that it is quite equal to your own weight; and so of the world at large—everybody or nearly everybody, has virtue enough for all we want with him. This English habit—for it is essentially English—of eternally investigating everything, is like the policy of a man who would fire a round-shot every morning at his house, to see if it were well and securely built."

"I don't, I can't agree with you," cried Harcourt.

"Be it so, my dear fellow; only don't give me your reasons, and at least I shall respect your motives."

"What would you do, then, in Glencore's place? Let me ask you that."

"You may as well inquire how I should behave if I were a quadruped. Don't you perceive, that I never could, by any possibility, place myself in such a false position. The man who, in a case of difficulty, takes counsel from his passions, is exactly like one who, being thirsty, fills himself out a bumper of aquafortis and drinks it off."

"I wish with all my heart you'd give up aphorisms, and just tell me how we could serve this poor fellow; for I feel that there is a gleam of light breaking through his dark fortunes."

"When a man is in the state Glencore is now in, the best policy is to let him alone.

They tell us that when Murat's blood was up, the Emperor always left him to his own guidance, since he either did something excessively brilliant, or made such a blunder as recalled him to subjection again. Let us treat our friend in this fashion, and wait. Oh, my worthy Colonel, if you but knew what a secret there is in that same waiting policy. Many a game is won by letting the adversary move out of his turn."

"If all this subtlety be needed to guide a man in the plain road of life, what is to become of poor simple fellows like myself?"

"Let them never go far from home, Harcourt, and they'll always find their way back," said Upton; and his eyes twinkled with quiet drollery. "Come, now," said he, with perfect good nature of look and voice, "If I won't tell you what I should counsel Glencore in this emergency, I'll do the next best thing—I'll tell you what advice you'd give him."

"Let us hear it, then," said the other.

"You'd send him abroad to search out his wife; ask her forgiveness for all the wrong he has done her; call out any man that whispered the shadow of a reproach against her; and go back to such domesticity as it might please Heaven to accord him."

"Certainly, if the woman has been unjustly dealt with——"

"There's the rock you always split on; you are everlastingly in search of a character. Be satisfied when you have eaten a hearty breakfast, and don't ask for a bill of health. Researches are always dangerous. My great-grandfather, who had a passion for genealogy, was cured of it by discovering that the first of the family was a staymaker! Let the lesson not be lost on us."

"From all which I am to deduce that you'd ask no questions—take her home again, and say nothing."

"You forget, Harcourt, we are now dis-

cussing the line of action *you* would recommend; I am only hinting at the best mode of carrying out *your* ideas."

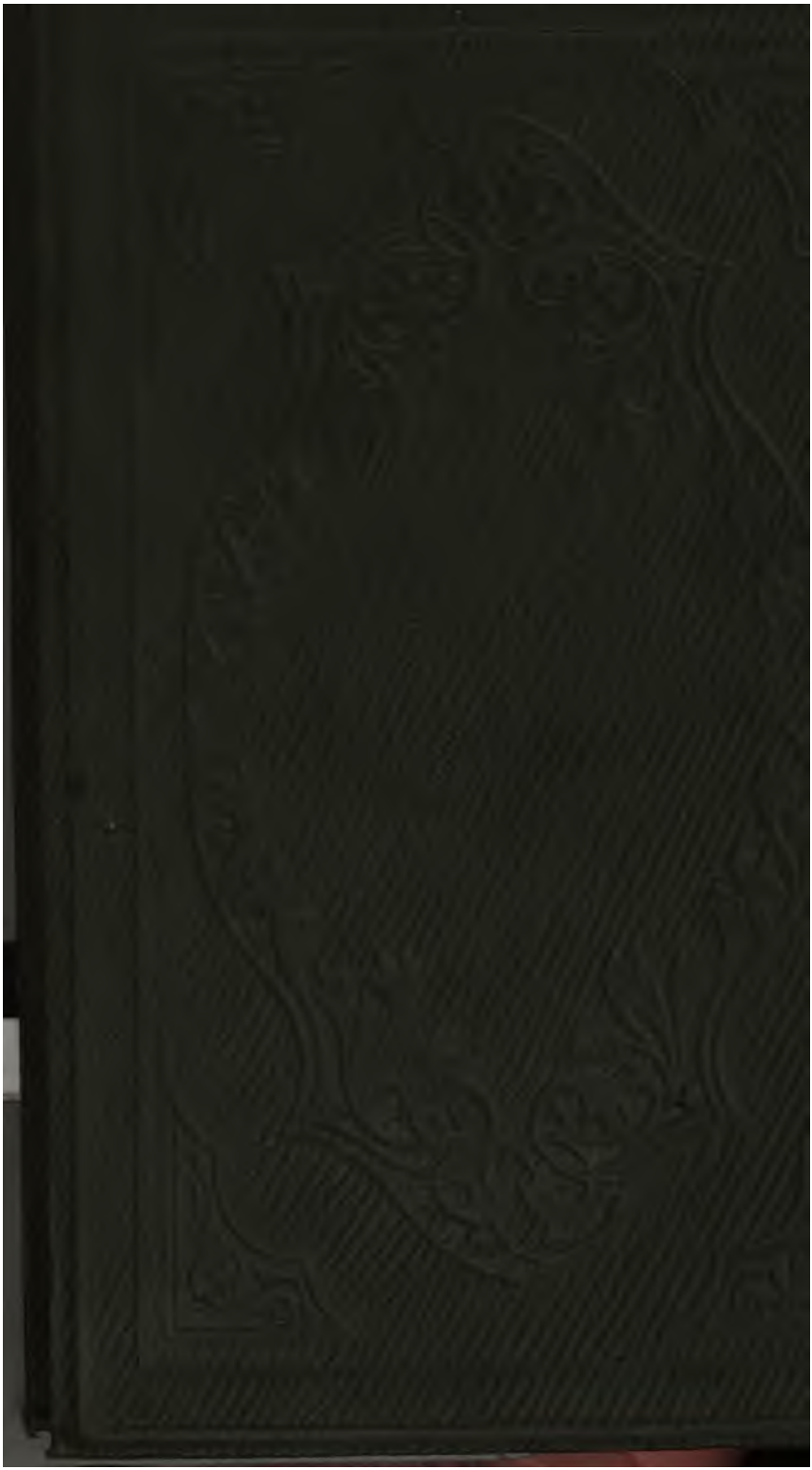
"Just for the pleasure of showing me that I didn't know how to walk in the road I made myself," said Harcourt, laughing.

"What a happy laugh that was, Harcourt. How plainly, too, it said, 'Thank Heaven, I'm not like that fellow with all his craft!' And you are right too, my dear friend; if the devil were to walk the world now, he'd be bored beyond endurance, seeing nothing but the old vices played over again and again; and so it is with all of us who have a spice of his nature. We'd give anything to see one new trick on the cards. Good night, and pleasant dreams to you." And with a sigh that had in its cadence something almost painful, he gave his two fingers to the honest grasp of the other, and withdrew.

"You're a better fellow than you think

yourself, or wish any one else to believe you," muttered Harcourt, as he puffed his cigar; and he ruminated over this reflection till it was bed-time.

And Harcourt was right.

END OF VOL. II.

C. WHITING, BEAUFORT HOUSE, STRAND.